

**LACKAWANNA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS  
FOR A CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER**

**February 25, 2013**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that pursuant to a fair and open process, sealed submissions will be received and reviewed by the County of Lackawanna (the "County") Board of Commissioners ("Board of Commissioners") for a Child Advocacy Center for **July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014.**

Respondents must submit their written submission by **4:00 p.m.** prevailing time on **Monday, March 25, 2013.**

Submissions received will be reviewed and evaluated by the Board, based upon such criteria as the Board, in its sole discretion, deems appropriate. The Board reserves the right to request clarification or additional information from any respondent. The Board, in its sole discretion, may accept the proposal of a respondent, may choose a respondent with which the Board will enter into negotiations, or may reject all proposals.

The Board reserves the opportunity to modify this Request for Qualifications at its own discretion and without prior notice, and to waive any immaterial defect or informality in any proposal as may be permitted by law.

**PURPOSE:**

Lackawanna County Department of Human Services/Office of Youth and Family Services (DHS/OYFS) is requesting proposals for Request for Qualifications to solicit submissions from qualified practitioners to continue operation and/or for Multidisciplinary Teams to develop into a Child Advocacy Center (CAC). Proposals must be submitted for either continued operation of a CAC or the development of a CAC.

Child Advocacy Centers utilize a multidisciplinary team approach to provide the investigation and service needs to child sexual abuse & severe child physical abuse victims and their non-offending caregivers. CAC facilities offer a non-threatening, child-friendly environment in which multidisciplinary team facilitation, case management, consultation, forensic interviews, medical exams, crisis counseling, advocacy and educational services are offered.

All CAC applicants to this RFQ shall be an accredited member of the National Children's Alliance (NCA) or striving towards meeting the NCA program standards.

Additional resources and information about NCA can be obtained by going to the NCA website: [www.nca-online.org](http://www.nca-online.org).

## **PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS:**

1. Two (2) copies of the proposal must be provided. Qualifications must be submitted to the Board of Commissioners, c/o Maria Elkins, Chief of Staff, 200 Adams Avenue, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Scranton, Pennsylvania, 18503. Qualifications must be submitted in a sealed envelope with the name of the firm submitting clearly marked on the outside of the envelope. The County assumes no responsibility for delays in any form of carrier, mail, or delivery service causing the submission to be received after the above-referenced due date and time. Submissions by fax, telephone or email is not permitted. The final selection will be made in the sole discretion of the Board.
2. All questions regarding this Request for Qualifications should be made in writing to the Board of Commissioners, c/o Maria Elkins, Chief of Staff, [elkinsm@lackawannacounty.org](mailto:elkinsm@lackawannacounty.org) 200 Adams Avenue, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Scranton, Pennsylvania, 18503 by **Monday, March 4, 2013**. All responses to questions will be posted on the Lackawanna County website at [www.lackawannacounty.org](http://www.lackawannacounty.org) by **Monday, March 11, 2013**.

## **CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF PROPOSAL:**

The Board will independently evaluate each submission and selection will be made upon the following criteria:

1. Child-Appropriate/Child-Friendly Facility: A Child Advocacy Center provides a comfortable, private, child-friendly setting that is both physically and psychologically safe for clients.
2. Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) approach: A multi team approach minimally includes: Law Enforcement, Child Protective Services, Prosecution, Medical, Victim Advocacy, and Children's Advocacy Center.
3. Organizational Capacity: A designated legal entity responsible for program and fiscal operations has been established and implements basic sound administrative practices including but not limited to the ability to set a fee for service schedule and bill according to procedures outlined by County and State policy and regulation.
4. Cultural Competency and Diversity: The CAC promotes policies, practices and procedures that are culturally competent. Cultural competency is defined as the capacity to function in more than one culture, requiring the ability to appreciate, understand and interact with members of diverse populations within the local community.
5. Forensic Interviews: Forensic interviews are conducted in a neutral, fact-finding nature and coordinated to avoid duplicative interviewing. The setting should also provide the ability of investigative and/or therapeutic personnel to observe the forensic interview via two-way mirror or closed circuit television. Interviews should be conducted by a Masters level clinician. Audio-visual recordings shall be made and maintained by the CAC with the ability to provide

copies of said recordings for the lawful purposes of DHS/OYFS and Law Enforcement Agencies.

The CAC will be responsible for scheduling forensic interviews and medical evaluations and for directly coordinating the attendance of all applicable parties.

6. Medical Evaluation: Specialized medical evaluation and treatment are to be made available to CAC clients as part of the team response, including but not limited to sexual assault assessments, physical assault assessments, and failure to thrive assessments, either at the CAC or through coordination and referral with other specialized medical providers.
7. Therapeutic Intervention: Specialized mental health services are to be made available as part of the team response, either at the CAC or through coordination and referral with other appropriate treatment providers.
8. Court Testimony: CAC staff or contractors conducting forensic interviews or medical evaluations/assessments for the CAC must be available to testify at dependency, child protection proceedings and child abuse appeals hearings. In addition, the CAC will have the ability to provide information to Lackawanna County Department of Human Services/Office of Youth and Family Services (DHS/OYFS) regarding the status of the criminal prosecution on cases active with DHS/OYFS and/or cases indicated for child abuse.
9. Training: The CAC shall coordinate multidisciplinary training whenever possible based upon the needs of the partner agencies and the CAC.
10. Ability to meet timelines and schedules for completion on an expedited basis as set forth by the Board;
11. Availability to accommodate any required meetings of the Board; and
12. Other factors determined to be in best interest of the County in the Board's sole discretion.

## **PROPOSAL**

Each submittal must be in sufficient detail to permit evaluation, at a minimum, with respect to the following issues. Submittals must include the information that is specifically requested herein as well as such additional information as a respondent deems relevant to the process. Each respondent agrees that the submission constitutes a firm offer to the County that cannot be withdrawn for ninety (90) days from the proposal due date.

1. **Scope of Services/Prior Experience** - All submittals must detail the services proposed to be provided and the firm's experience in providing such services.

2. **Personnel** - All submissions to the County must include the following:
  - a. Name, address, and brief description of your firm;
  - b. The names, experience, and qualifications of the individual(s) who would be primarily responsible for performing services on behalf of the County;
  - c. A statement of assurance that your firm is not currently in violation of any regulatory rules and regulations that may have any impact on your firm's operations; and
  - d. A statement that your firm is not involved in any current litigation with the County.
  - e. Statement about the ability of the firm to meet with the Evaluation Board to discuss the RFQ.
  
3. **Conflict of Interest** - All submittals must state that there are no conflicts of interest to which the firm would be subject if it were to provide the requested legal services on behalf of the County.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:**

This Request for Qualifications, and all submissions received in response, will remain confidential (with the exception of information that was previously public information), and will not be used for any purpose other than the evaluation of the proposals received by the Board. Each respondent, by responding to this Request, acknowledges the terms expressed above and agrees to safeguard the details of this process and the contents of this document. If your organization does not agree to these conditions concerning confidentiality, or if you elect not to respond to this Request for Qualifications, please return this Request to the Board and retain no copies thereof.

**Lackawanna County Qualification**  
**Base Selection Process**

The statement of qualifications will be evaluated in accordance with the County's Qualifications Base Selection Process. Anyone submitting a statement of qualifications is advised to review that process, which is set forth on the County's website.