

**GEORGIA DIVISION OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES**

Foster Care Services – Caregiver Recruitment and Retention Unit

2 Peachtree Street NW

Suite 18-233

Atlanta, Georgia 30303

FY16 Caregiver Recruitment and Retention Innovations Statement of Need

## STATEMENT OF NEED

Georgia's Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) recognizes the immediate need for additional recruitment and retention of foster caregivers and is therefore seeking providers from non-profit entities to support this effort by testing out innovative strategies that may lead to increased recruitment and / or retention of foster caregivers.

DFCS desires to ultimately increase the number of *best* placement match options for children in foster care to at least three (3) per child. A *best* placement match option is one that is the least restrictive and most appropriate placement type for the child; and where a caregiver has the protective capacities to meet the child's needs and who agree to serve the child throughout the duration of their foster care episode. Such placements are also located within a desired proximity that ensures the child will maintain connections with their family, school, and community of origin.

Additionally, DFCS seeks to increase the retention of foster caregivers to at least five (5) years of service. Many of the caregivers who volunteer to act as substitute caregivers for children in need of placements are most often driven to do so because of their intrinsic desire to serve. Their sacrificial service is not always recognized as it should be, and their only incentive for caring for children in need has been receiving and caring for even more. We are looking for creative methods that encourage our caregivers to continue to serve; and that incites them to elicit the interest and onboarding of other potential caregivers as well.

DFCS is therefore seeking to understand what works to increase the number of new foster caregivers as well increase the retention of veteran foster caregivers.

### **BACKGROUND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION**

The Georgia Child and Family Services Report for FFY 2010-2014 documented that from October 1, 2012, to September 30, 2013, DFCS received 16,608 inquiries from prospective applicants interested in becoming a foster parent, adoptive parent, or foster/adopt parents. Statewide, approximately 49 homes (of all types) were approved each month; however, approximately 216 homes were closed in the same period. At the beginning of the reporting period, there were 2,262 active foster homes. As of September 30, 2012, there were 2,099 active foster homes, 292 active adoptive homes, and 426 active foster/adopt homes. As of submission of the Final Report there were 1,686 active foster homes, 343 adoptive homes, and 281 legal risk homes. (*Analysis of Data: Children in Care and Foster and Adoptive Resources*. Georgia Statewide Foster and Adoptive Caregiver Recruitment and Retention Plan, FFY 2015-2019).

Data as of September 9, 2014 show that, of the 3,059 homes in full approval status in CY 2012, only 2,130 of those same homes were still active in December 31, 2013. The retention rate was thus 69.6%. Of the 3,316 homes in full approval status as of January 1, 2013, about 78.3% remain in full approval status as of September 9, 2014.

The following link will direct you to the current information regarding the DFCS recruitment and retention plans and reports. <https://www.gascore.com/content/page.cfm/342/>

**The successful proposal will include one or both of the following:**

- Innovative approaches targeting the recruit of potential foster caregivers who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the foster care system and who can meet the needs of at least one specific category of children including the following: medically fragile, teens, sibling groups, developmental delayed or have autism spectrum disorders.
- Creative methods that will ultimately increase the support and training of foster caregivers and ultimately the satisfaction of caregivers leading to their increased service tenure (retention).

### WHO MAY APPLY

This solicitation is for non-profit entities only; for-profit, state, and local entities are ineligible. The non-profit entity must have a minimum of two (2) years of documented experience recruiting and/or supporting foster families. Proposal must be submitted by the entity that will perform the proposed services.

If the submitting entity is not an RBWO contracted Child Placing Agency (CPA), the proposal must indicate which set of county or contracted RBWO CPA foster caregivers will be the focus of the interventions. If applicable, a letter of partnership must be included from that county or CPA.

**Award Limits**

The grant submission **cannot exceed \$25,000**. There is no required cash match. Multiple awards will be made. Successful programs may receive continued funding based on availability of funds.

The maximum number of submissions from any single agency/organization is *three* (3) proposals. Applicants submitting more than one proposal must demonstrate that the agency has the capacity and resources to meet all programmatic and contract requirements if all proposals are accepted.

**Use of Subcontractors:**

In the event that applicant intends to subcontract any proposed services to another legal entity, (non-profit, for-profit or public entity), this must be disclosed in the proposal and is subject to review and approval by DFCS during the selection process and thereafter in the event that a proposal is selected.

Applicants are responsible for monitoring and supervising the delivery and quality of services provided by subcontractors in addition to ensuring that they meet all applicable contract and service delivery requirements.

## PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

### **Contract Period**

Interventions must be fully developed, implemented and results determined within a 12-month period. The contract period is expected to begin by May 1, 2016 (may be earlier or later) and last for twelve (12) months.

Contract must be fully executed prior to commencement of service provision. Services provided prior to commencement date of contract are ineligible. Expenses incurred prior to commencement date of contract are also ineligible.

Services must commence within 30 days of contract commencement date. Failure to do so may result in termination of contract.

### **Submission Requirements and deadlines:**

Applications must be submitted via email only no later than February 5, 2016 NOON EDT to DFCS, Caregiver Recruitment & Retention Unit Manager, Candis L. Jones via email at [Candis.Jones@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:Candis.Jones@dhs.ga.gov)

### **Required Contents:**

Applications that do not meet all submission criteria listed below will be disqualified from further review.

#### **1. *Application General Information***

- a. *General information regarding the entity including description of experiences recruiting and/or supporting foster families.*
- b. **MUST** be signed by a current officer identified on the Secretary of State Registration website.
- c. *Verification of non-profit status (Corporate Resolution) must be included in the application.*
- d. *A confirmation statement must be included stating that the entity can meet the state's contractual requirements, including insurance requirements listed below:*
  - Malpractice/Professional Liability Policy (\$1 million per occurrence/\$3 million aggregate policy limits)
  - Commercial General Liability Policy (\$1 million per occurrence/\$3 million dollar aggregate policy limits)
  - Business Auto Policy (\$1 million per occurrence/\$1 million dollar aggregate policy limits)
  - Commercial Umbrella Policy (\$1 million and \$3 million dollar policy limits)

#### **2. *Proposal Abstract (not to exceed 1 page)***

#### **3. *Proposal Narrative (not to exceed 3 pages) including:***

- a. **Needs Assessment** – an assessment of the needs of the population of caregivers/communities to be served by the entity. Proposal needs to indicate whether caregivers with Child Placing Agency (CPA) or a DFCS county caregiver population will be targeted. If the target is neither of these populations (ie., a CPA testing the proposal on families contracted within their agency), then there must be a letter of support from the target supervising agency (CPA or county)
  - b. **Organizational Information** – entity must describe their agency makeup, to include their current staffing as well as credentials of those proposed to carry out the plan
  - c. **Innovative Recruitment Activities** – describe the activities that will be utilized to increase public awareness and interest in fostering and adoption, how those activities are different from what is currently being practiced. Include any evidence that supports how such activities have been effective and successful in the past. Activity must be an innovative approach targeting the recruit of potential foster caregivers who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the foster care system and who can meet the needs of at least one specific category of children including the following: medically fragile, teens, sibling groups, developmental delayed or have autism spectrum disorders.
- (AND/OR)
- d. **Innovative Retention Activities** – describe the activities that will be offered to improve the retention of caregivers. Such activities should ideally not only increase the caregivers’ capacity to meet the service needs of the children placed in their home, but also increase their satisfaction. Activity must be a creative method that will ultimately increase the support and training of foster caregivers and ultimately the satisfaction of caregivers leading to their increased service tenure (retention).
  - e. **Replicative Potential of Ideas Proposed** – describe how the activities can be replicated in all areas of the state
  - f. **Measurability** – define how success will be measured – should include but not be limited to both qualitative and quantitative descriptors.
4. **Project Schedule**  
*MUST be consistent with services described in Narrative*
  5. **Budget (requested amount)**

### Qualitative Review:

Each eligible proposal will be evaluated by the DFCS Foster Care Services Team. This review includes a comprehensive evaluation of the responsiveness of the proposal to the service priorities identified in the State of Need in its entirety, as well as an evaluation of individual proposal components.

## Award Decisions & Notification

DFCS has sole discretion to determine awards through the Statement of Need process.

Applicants will be notified by DFCS of award decisions by February 28, 2016. Local and regional DFCS offices will also be notified of the successful applicants in their respective counties.

Notification of selection does not constitute approval of the proposal as submitted. Prior to preparation of a contract, DFCS reserves the right to review the proposal and require revisions as necessary regarding level of funding, scope of services to be provided, delineation of deliverables, and other issues of concern to align the contract with DFCS objectives. DFCS further reserves the sole discretion to decline to fund proposals if the proposal does not develop into a timely and acceptable contractual arrangement within the parameters defined by DFCS.

- **A previous award from DFCS does not constitute a commitment for continued funding.**
- **All decisions are final.**
- **No appeals will be considered.**

Entities, agencies or organizations that are on the DHS delinquent audit list at the time of award notification will be considered ineligible for a contract.

Questions regarding this SON should be submitted via email to Candis Jones at [candis.jones@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:candis.jones@dhs.ga.gov).

## Distribution of Award

- Distribution of funds is based on monthly performance, programmatic reports and required documentation supporting services provided within the scope of the contract.
- Contractor may be required to provide supplemental information to DFCS prior to payment.

## DFCS Program Contact:

Candis L. Jones  
 Caregiver Recruitment and Retention Unit Manager  
[candis.jones@dhs.ga.gov](mailto:candis.jones@dhs.ga.gov)

## Technical Assistance:

Copy of all questions and responses will be posted on [www.gascore.com](http://www.gascore.com) under Funding Opportunities, FFY2016 DFCS Caregiver Recruitment and Innovations SON FAQs.

*Expenses incurred in the preparation of this application are the responsibility of the applicant and are not reimbursable by DFCS.*