

STATE DEPARTMENT ON AGING
PLAN FOR PROCUREMENT OF HUMAN SERVICE CONTRACTS
STATE FISCAL YEAR 2016 THROUGH 2018

I. INTRODUCTION

The State Department on Aging, as the designated State Unit on Aging, became a separate department on January 1, 2013. Prior to that date, the State Unit on Aging was part of the Bureau of Aging, Community and Social Work Services of the Department of Social Services. Procurement activities for the programs and services of the State Unit on Aging were included in the plan approved for the Department of Social Services. This plan was approved for State Fiscal Years 2013 through 2015.

This plan is being submitted for the State Department on Aging (SDA) and its procurement activities for State Fiscal Years 2016 through 2018.

II. PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

This plan describes the approach that the SDA will take for the procurement of purchase of human service contracts for State Fiscal Years 2016 – 2018. The plan is designed to meet operation requirements and to be in accordance with existing legislation (including P.A. 07-195), regulations and policies. SDA is committed to an open and transparent competitive procurement system.

The plan is designed to combine the State Department on Aging's operational requirements with state and federal requirements, while ensuring a fair, open, consistent, competitive and responsive procurement process. This plan will direct all aspects of such procurements and will be reviewed periodically to ensure its continued relevance. While the basic approach, principles and processes have been outlined in the plan, specifics as to the timing, sequencing and definition of services to be procured, services to use practice improvement methods rather than competitive procurement or services to be waived from procurement may be modified and adjusted as the plan unfolds. Such adjustments will be proposed to OPM as an amendment to the approved plan.

The plan reflects the Department's ongoing process of reviewing current services, service delivery models and client needs. All SDA POS contracts include client outcomes with specific measures for evaluating program effectiveness. The Department electronic management information system (MIS) provides program data on contractor performance. The use of electronic reports on services provided and client outcome measures evaluates

a contractor's performance and can be used to compare contractors on a statewide basis.

III. PROCUREMENT PROCESS

The State Department on Aging provides a broad range of supportive services to older adults, their families and caregivers to empower older adults to live full independent lives. The State Department on Aging supports person-centered planning and provides leadership for the network of aging professionals who advocate on behalf of those who cannot and who work collaboratively to use resources for the maximum benefit of older adults.

As specified in the Older Americans Act, the State Department on Aging is designated as the State Unit on Aging for the State of Connecticut in order to receive the federal Older Americans Act funds. The SDA administers the federal funds received through the Older Americans Act for the provision of services to support adults age 60 and older. As specified in the Older Americans Act, these funds are distributed to Connecticut's Area Agencies on Aging. There are five (5) such agencies on aging in Connecticut. State funds are also received in accordance with State Statutes for the administration of Older Americans Act programs and services as well as other programs and services to support older adults living in the home and community of their choice.

Currently, SDA has 48 Purchase of Service contracts for the provision of direct client services for approximately \$25,000,000. Many of the existing contracts for direct client services are designated by the Older Americans Act. There are existing contracts for direct client services which are a result of the federal competitive grant process and the partners are named in the federal grant application process. Lastly, many of the contracts have been historically funded following a determination that the quality of the service provided along with the need for continuity of services has outweighed the benefit of competitive procurement. All contractors are monitored for compliance with program delivery requirements and fiscal accountability.

The decision to conduct a competitive procurement, regardless of the historical funding of contracts supporting a particular program is impacted by several factors:

- Contractor performance issues;
- The identification of a new service need;
- Changes to the current program by design or through state and/or federal requirement;
- A desire to restructure the existing service delivery system;
- Changes to available program funding; or
- The number of current providers affected by the re-bidding and the ability to maintain uninterrupted services.

The analysis also considers whether or not a practice improvement approach or a waiver from competitive procurement should be requested from OPM.

The decision to competitively procure services is a decision first made at a program level by the Commissioner, Program Manager and Program Staff Person. Currently the SDA is being supported by the Department of Social Services (DSS) Procurement staff for its procurement needs. The plan that is followed and will continue to be followed will mirror the plan that has been approved for DSS and is currently in place for State Fiscal Years 2013 through 2015. When a competitive procurement need is identified, the SDA program staff person contacts DSS Procurement Staff to initiate procurement procedures.

At this time, all operational activities related to the procurement process for human service contracts are supported by DSS Procurement Staff. This includes control of the working document, requesting necessary approval from OPM, posting the RFP to the State Contracting Portal and ensuring the posting to the DSS and SDA website. The DSS Procurement Staff is responsible for the procurement process, coordination of the receipt and responses to questions and the development of the evaluation tool. A DSS staff person is the official contact for the procurement. Staff facilitates the scoring meetings to ensure that such meetings are conducted in accordance with the procurement standards. Following the conclusion of the scoring session and following the recommendation of the evaluation team, the DSS Procurement Staff submits a procurement summary and recommendation to the SDA Commissioner.

While the DSS Procurement Staff manages the procurement process, SDA's Program staff and Fiscal staff are integral participants in the procurement process. Each staff involved in the process shall sign a confidentiality statement and are advised not to discuss the procurement with any other SDA staff to preserve the integrity of the process and to avoid the risk of disqualification.

Competitive procurements initiated by SDA will adhere to the procurement standards set forth in the Connecticut General Statutes and established by the Secretary of OPM in the [Procurement Standards: For Personal Service Agreements and Purchase of Service Contracts](#) which is embedded in this section as a hyperlink. The procurement process reflects best practices in the public sector which include:

- **Openness:** Current providers will be notified in advance when one of their funded services will be re-bid. RFP's will be posted on the DAS and SDA websites and advertised as required.

- **Transparency:** RFP's will clearly state the criteria by which proposals will be evaluated as well as the weighting of the criterion. Results of the RFP process will be posted on the DAS website.
- **Fairness:** Providers who participate in the development of an RFP for new or existing services will not be allowed to compete for a contract to provide those services. Members of the RFP development and evaluation teams are required to sign a Confidentiality Statement, in which they declare and attest that they have no personal or financial interests in the outcome of the RFP process.
- **Competition:** All eligible providers will have equal opportunity to compete for SDA contracts. No RFP requirements will specify any features that unnecessarily discriminate, either directly or indirectly, against current or potential providers.
- **Standardization:** a standardized RFP process will be implemented. It includes the use of a standardized RFP template, uniform submission requirements including a minimum seven (7) weeks between the release of the RFP and the proposal due date, standardized proposal review and scoring procedures and compliance with OPM RFP guidelines.

IV. PROCUREMENT SCHEDULE

The SDA procurement plan is proposed for State Fiscal Years 2016 through 2018. See Exhibit 1 for the Projected Re-Procurement Timetable. Procurements are guided by the following principles:

- a. Maintenance of continuity of care for the vulnerable populations SDA serves to ensure that disruption in services is minimized as programs are competitively procured and new contracts are implemented;
- b. Stimulation of quality, innovation current best practices and efficiency in service delivery;
- c. Use of clearly defined, measurable outcomes and quality/performance measures;
- d. A procurement schedule based on a strategic approach that considers client needs, barrier and best timing; and
- e. Coordination of procurement activities with other State Human Service Agencies.

V. PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT WAIVERS

At this time, the SDA is not requesting any waivers for Levels of Care due to practice improvements in lieu of the competitive procurement process. See Exhibit 2 for Levels of Care Requesting Waivers due to use of Practice Improvements.

VI. WAIVERS FROM COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT

SDA is requesting waivers from competitive procurement for specific programs. The following factors were considered in making a determination about which programs should seek waivers from competitive procurement:

- a. the current contracts are for essential services for vulnerable clients;
- b. the state has invested as significant amount of bond money in real property or physical plant for the program;
- c. the Department contracting with a municipality or other governmental entity;
- d. The cost to the state of a competitive procurement process would outweigh the benefits of such a process;
- e. Services will be provided by a contractor mandated by Connecticut General Statutes, a public act or special act;
- f. The contractor has a special capability, unique experience, proprietary services or patent rights; and/or
- g. Services will be provided by a contractor mandated by the federal government.

VII. MULTI-YEAR CONTRACTING

The Department will put in place multi-year contracts with the selected providers to minimize the administrative burden of an RFP process on its contractors and departmental staff. SDA generally executes multi-year contracts with a term of three years to reduce the frequency of competitive procurement. Specifically SDA will execute three to five year contracts for the provision of that level of care. The SDA will request approval for changes to contract period in advance from OPM, when needed.

VIII. IMPLEMENTATION AND OVERSIGHT

The Department stands ready to implement this Procurement Plan following approval by OPM. The SDA procurement plan is effective for State Fiscal Years 2016 through 2018 and shall be subject to review and modification as may be necessary from time to time. All modifications will be submitted to OPM for approval. Requests for Proposals during the time period covered in this procurement plan shall be issued in accordance with the guidelines of this plan. The end date of this procurement plan shall be June 30, 2018.

PROJECTED REPROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

<u>PROCUREMENT SCHEDULE</u>					
For SFY 2016, 2017, 2018					
Program/Service Name	Last RFP (SFY, Qtr)	\$ Amount (Total)	Contracts (Number)	Next RFP (SFY, Qtr)	RFP Cycle (In Years)
Elderly Health Promotion	SFY 2015	\$158,988	3	SFY 2018, 3 rd	3
Senior Community Services (SCS)	SFY 2015, 2 nd	\$944,193	4	SFY 2018, 2 nd	3

**LEVELS OF CARE REQUESTING WAIVER
DUE TO USE OF PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT IN LIEU OF
COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT**

<u>ALTERNATIVE PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT APPROACH SCHEDULE</u>					
For SFY 2016, 2017, 2018					
Program/Service Name	Last RFP (SFY, Qtr)	\$ Amount (Total)	Contracts (Number)	Next RFP (SFY, Qtr)	Rationale for Practice Improvement (see page 3 of plan)

LEVELS OF CARE REQUESTING WAIVERS

Program/Service Name	WAIVER REQUESTS				
	For SFY 2016, 2017, 2018				
Program/Service Name	Last RFP (SFY, Qtr)	\$ Amount (Total)	Contracts (Number)	Next RFP (SFY, Qtr)	Rationale for Waiver Request
Aging and Disability Resource Centers	N/A	\$762,046	12	N/A	Contractors named in federal competitive grant application
Alzheimer's Aide	N/A	\$224,232	5	N/A	Funding to 5 Area Agencies on Aging. Funds are used to support salaries of Aides who provide services to individuals with Alzheimer's Disease in an Adult Day Care setting. Area Agencies already contract with Adult Daycare Centers and funds have been historically used for this purpose.
CHOICES	N/A	\$727,316	6	N/A	Funded by PL 101-508. CGS Sec 17b-427 references that the Department shall administer the program in conjunction with the Area Agencies on Aging and the Center for Medicare Advocacy.
Congregate Housing Services Program (CHS)	N/A	\$501,384	2	N/A	State Department on Aging is grantee with HUD. The federal grant specifies services in designated rural areas and selected housing communities in Eastern and Western Connecticut. Eastern and Western Area Agency on Aging have been the contractors since the inception of the grant and is supported by HUD. The state funds for this program are used to meet the required federal funds for the provision of services under this program. The purpose of this program is to prevent unnecessary institutionalization; coordinate provision of supportive services to meet the needs of eligible residents and to ensure long-term provision of such services. To procure these services would be detrimental to the consumers served as a lapse in service could result in institutionalization.
Chronic Disease Self-Management Education	N/A	\$152,000	7	N/A	Contractors named in federal competitive grant application
Cognitive Training	N/A	\$50,909		N/A	This entity is a line item in the Department's budget since 2007. Programs are evidence based and supported by research and sound educational principles. Approved services are provided to both Department caregiver programs.
Elderly Nutrition	N/A	\$2,508,482	5	N/A	Under CGS 17b-792, nutrition programs for elderly persons which provide

					nutritionally sound diets for needy elderly persons and such programs are to fully support and utilize congregate feeding and nutrition education of elderly citizens who qualify for such program. These funds are distributed to the five Area Agencies on Aging for the provision of nutrition services as specified in the Older Americans Act (PL 109-365) for the Elderly Nutrition Program.
Fall Prevention	N/A	\$475,000	1	N/A	CGS Sec 17b-33 established a fall prevention program. The statute allows that the Commissioner award grants or enter into contracts with organizations or institutions deemed qualified by the Commissioner. This program continues to make progress in its statewide efforts to expand. This project mitigates the risk of falls and reduces the cost associated with preventable falls and avoidable hospitalizations.
HRA, Inc. Las Perlas Hispanas	N/A	\$20,000	1	N/A	CGS Sec. 45a-82 (HB 5557) established the program at Las Perlas Hispanas Center (HRA, Inc.) in 2013. In 2014, Las Perlas continued to be in DSS's budget for services provided by Las Perlas Hispanas Center. In 2015, these funds were permanently transferred from DSS to SDA as part of DSS's technical adjustment Budget option. These funds provide services to low - income Hispanic adults residing in New Britain and who are unable to access services. These funds support case management services, access and information and socialization services so that the older adult is able to remain in the home and community of choice for as long as possible.
Medicare Legal Assistance	N/A	\$314,226	1	N/A	CGS 17b-427 specifies that information advice and representation where appropriate, concerning the Medicare appeals process is provided by a qualified attorney or paralegal. Center for Medicare Advocacy fulfills this role and is specifically named in the statute as found above as listed in the CHOICES description.
Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP)	N/A	\$1,460,498	5	N/A	Older Americans Act (PL 109-365) designates SDA to distribute funds to its Area Agencies on Aging for provision of services
Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)	N/A	\$226,651	5	N/A	Older Americans Act (PL 109-365) designates SDA to distribute funds to its

					Area Agencies on Aging for provision of services
Statewide Respite Care Program	N/A	\$2,179,670	6	N/A	CGS Sec 17b-349e for Area Agencies on Aging only. Alzheimer's Association is not named specifically in statute but was original author of legislation to enact this program. While not specifically named, the Alzheimer's Association has been a key partner since inception and is well positioned to provide services as a premier disease agency. Dept does not wish to procure services.
Title III	N/A	\$14,083,352	5	N/A	Older Americans Act (PL 109-365) designates SDA to distribute funds to its Area Agencies on Aging for provision of services
Title VII	N/A	\$244,892	5	N/A	Older Americans Act (PL 109-365) designates SDA to distribute funds to its Area Agencies on Aging for provision of services