

RFA: #14 Short Term Foster Care



Saint Francis
MINISTRIES

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SECTION I

A. **Introduction**

SFM is dedicated to providing services to children and families involved in the child welfare system in the least intrusive and least restrictive manner possible. Services offered are based on family voice and choice and designed to give children and families the opportunity to safely preserve their family whenever possible, engage with both formal and informal community resources, strengthen parents' protective capacity in order to keep children safe from harm, meet the needs of children and families as identified through the assessment process, be culturally humble, and include parents, siblings, and extended family.

SFM continuum of services includes prevention activities, coordination and services that focus on the safety, health and wellbeing of the child, parental and sibling engagement, family voice and choice in service provision, respite, independent living, adoption, domestic violence, safety, mental health, substance abuse and treatment services, as well as educational initiatives. These services are provided to children and families by Saint Francis personnel or through sub-contracted vendors. Specifically, Saint Francis is seeking providers whom are able and/or willing to provide services through the provision Well-Supported, Supported, and Promising Practice evidence-based models that strengthen families and build protective factors in families, in compliance with the federal Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), part of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (H.R. 1892). Additionally, the Subrecipients will ensure services are culturally humble, trauma-informed, and engage and support the biological/legal parents in the process of family preservation or reunification.

Saint Francis is issuing this Request for Application (RFA) in order to qualify Providers to deliver **Short Term Foster Care** throughout the Eastern Service Area. The Service Description detailed in this RFA contains the mandatory minimum requirements Providers must meet in order to provide this service.

The subaward will be for the initial period of July 1, 2021 through February 28, 2023. Saint Francis reserves the right to extend the period of this subaward beyond the termination date when mutually agreeable to the Parties. The resulting subaward may not be an exclusive subaward as Saint Francis reserves the right to subaward for the same or similar services from other sources now or in the future. Under federal law, the resulting contract awarded will also be a "subaward", and the Contractor will also be a "subrecipient".

B. **Evaluation**

Responses will be evaluated based upon the criteria outlined in Section 3 of this document and scored accordingly. Providers' scores must meet the minimum standards set by Saint Francis to be considered for an offer to join the Saint Francis Provider Network.

Contracts may be entered into with those Applicants whose submissions meet the minimum requirements set forth by Saint Francis. Saint Francis reserves the right to contact individual references and to consider other sources of information to determine eligibility.

Saint Francis may reject any or all responses or parts thereof and/or cancel this RFA and re-solicit, if such an action is in Saint Francis' best interest. Saint Francis may waive informalities and minor irregularities on responses received. This RFA does not commit Saint Francis to award any contract or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of responses.

SECTION II

A. Necessary Documents

Providers who wish to submit a response shall complete all necessary documentation as identified in Section 4 of this RFA.

B. Specifications

The specifications included in this RFA provide adequate information as to whether or not Provider can meet the needs of Saint Francis. Deviations from the specifications may result in lower scores or be grounds for disqualification.

C. Questions

Saint Francis believes this RFA contains sufficient information to respond however will allow Providers to submit questions according to the Procurement Schedule in Section 5.

D. Provider Certification

By submission of a response, Provider certifies that Provider has neither paid nor agreed to pay any person, other than a bona fide employee, a fee or a brokerage resulting from the award of the contract.

E. Preparation of the Response

Providers are expected to examine all service requirements, rules, documents, forms, specifications, standard provisions, instructions, and review its response for accuracy before submitting its response: Failure to do so may result in lower scores or be grounds for disqualification.

F. Response Requirements

Responses should be completed and submitted electronically to ProviderRelationsNEESA@saintfrancisministries.org, hand delivered, or sent via certified mail Addressed to Saint Francis 9218 Bedford Ave Omaha, NE 68134 for Appendix A, Appendix B, and Letters of Recommendation.

Copies of the forms for Appendix A and Appendix B can be found on the Saint Francis Website.

SECTION III
RESPONSE EVALUATION CRITERIA

Responses will be evaluated through in depth analysis and will be based on the following criteria:

- (1) Provider's demonstration of understanding the Service Description requirements.
 - Provider's demonstration of experience, knowledge and education (or a combination thereof) in the following:
 - Family engagement
 - Wraparound principles
 - Trauma informed care
 - Skill training with directed practice
 - Engaging ongoing support in natural communities
 - Community resources and ability to collaborate
 - Child development
 - Skill building
 - Ability to incorporate FFPSA models
- (2) Provider's demonstration of experience with child welfare-involved youth and coaching and skill building in order to effect positive outcomes for youth and families.
- (3) Provider's Letters of Recommendation, reputation, professionalism, and completeness of response to this RFA.

Subcontractors must meet the above requirements to be considered for contract issuance.

SECTION IV

TIMELINE/SUBMITTAL DOCUMENTS

A. Timeline

- 1) Provider Submittal Documents are due no later than 4:00 p.m. Central Standard Time ~~April 23, 2021~~ **May 14, 2021**.
- 2) Responses will be evaluated from ~~April 26, 2021~~ **May 14, 2021** through ~~May 7, 2021~~ **May 21 2021**. During this time, Saint Francis may require Provider to accommodate further discussions with evaluation team. Provider will be notified in writing or by phone if this is requested.
- 3) Discussion may be conducted with Provider(s) for the purpose of clarifying responses to ensure the evaluation team has a full understanding of the responses to this RFA. In conducting discussions, there shall be no disclosure of any information derived from responses submitted by competing Providers. However, once this competitive procurement process is complete, all records and associated contracts are considered public record and may be released to third parties upon appropriately submitted public records request(s). Saint Francis reserves the right to conduct discussion if determined necessary. Discussions shall not constitute a contract award nor shall they confer any property rights on a Provider. Ward may be made without discussions, therefore, offers shall be submitted complete and on most favorable terms.
- 4) Providers selected to provide **Short Term Foster Care** will be contacted by end of business on ~~May 1, 2021~~ **May 21, 2021**.
- 5) Providers not selected to provide the services, but that meet the minimum score threshold, are put on the Qualified Provider Listing and will remain on that Listing for the full RFA cycle. Should there be a need for additional Providers to provide **Short Term Foster Care** a Qualified Provider will be contacted, unless a Qualified Provider is unavailable for that service in ESA.

B. **Submittal Documents**

- a. Appendix A – Submittal Letter and Provider Profile
 - i. Appendix A is required by each provider. Provider will include a list of all services provider is seeking a contract for. This document is only required once per provider regardless of the amount of services the provider is seeking to contract for.
- b. Appendix B – Services Response Form
 - i. Appendix B is required for each individual service provider is seeking a contract for.
- c. Letters of Recommendation
 - i. Each provider requires three letters of recommendation. No specific format is required however the response should support the provider's ability to provide the service(s).

C. **Responses must utilize the printed Submittal Forms (do not submit handwritten forms) located on the Saint Francis website.**

1. Email submittal documents with the following attachments to:
 - a. Electronic submissions must be sent in the pdf. Format.
 - b. The Subject Line in the email for submissions must include the name of the Organization and Procurement April 2021. (e.g. ABC Company – Procurement April 2021.

- c. Submittal documents should be attached to the email and named pursuant to the naming conversations listed below.
 - Appendix A Submittal Letter and Profile: Providername-AppendixA.pdf
 - Appendix B-Service Response Form(s): Providername-AppendixB.pdf
 - 3 References: Providername-References.pdf

Example: When ABC Company responds to this RFA, the Provider shall attach the following submittal documents to the email:

1. ABCCounseling-AppendixA.pdf
 2. ABCCounseling-AppendixB.pdf
 3. ABCCounseling-Recommendations.pdf
2. If submitting documents via hand delivery or certified mail, utilize the following instructions:
- a. Ensure all documents are in the following order
 - i. Appendix A Provider Submittal Letter and Profile
 - ii. Appendix B-Service Response Form(s)
 - iii. Three (3) Professional Letters of Recommendation
 - b. Ensure all documents are submitted at the same time.

SECTION V

Short-Term Foster Care Service Appendix

DEFINITION

Short Term Foster Care provides a short-term, 3-14 day placement in a licensed foster home supported by the contractor. This service is intended to support placement stability in family-based settings during an emergency and/or an unplanned child/parent separation. While designed to be short-term to ensure adequate time to plan for the youth/child's safe return home or to a kin or relative placement, on-going placement at a standard rate based on NCR results is expected should placement in a licensed foster home setting still be required and the placement shows goodness of fit between the youth/child and foster parent(s).

The Contractor shall be responsible for transporting children to their home school, activities, and services. Activities and services are expected to include visits with the child's family members, behavioral health appointments, medical appointments, and extra-curricular activities.

The Contractor shall communicate all known information about the child to the Licensed Foster Family. The Contractor will also provide input to planning processes such as Family Team Meetings, Independent Living Plans and preparation of Case Plans and Court Reports when requested by Saint Francis.

The Contractor will provide any information requested by Saint Francis necessary to complete reports required by any applicable Federal or State law and regulation.

The Contractor shall be in compliance with all DHHS policy and regulation, including regulation and licensure established by the Division of Public Health.

TARGET POPULATION

The target population of Short Term Foster Care is children or youth ages 5-18 who experience an immediate need for placement and relative/kin or an ongoing agency licensed foster home cannot be readily found.

LENGTH OF SERVICE

The initial length of service is up to three (3) days with a maximum length of stay of fourteen (14) days.

ACCEPTING & RESPONDING TO REFERRALS

The Contractor shall be available to accept Saint Francis Ministries Assessment Foster Care service referrals five (5) days per week during all open business hours. Additionally, the Contractor will ensure on-call staff are available for admission needs that arise outside of business hours.

DISCHARGE

The Contractor will collaborate with Saint Francis for the discharge of youth from Short Term Foster Care to their ongoing placement. The Contractor will assist in making the youth available for, and preparing them for any pre-placement visits or moves to placement. The Contractor will use a trauma informed approach to prepare youth for transitions and will collaborate with Saint Francis to ensure a transition that ensures the youth's well-being.

MINIMUM REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- The Subrecipient shall provide a written summary report on each child in placement to the referring Saint Francis Representative within fourteen (14) calendar days following the month of service provision. This written report will summarize the following information:

- The supportive services the Subrecipient provided to the foster parent(s), as well as the child(ren)'s progress toward stability. Supportive services outlined in the monthly report shall include concrete supports, resources, training, one-on-one instruction, and guidance provided to the foster parent(s) to ameliorate any stressors the foster parent(s) are experiencing, to manage the child's needs and behaviors, and to maintain the placement.
- Any medical, vision, and dental check-ups of children placed in the foster home that occurred during the reporting month.
- Mental health or behavioral needs of children placed in the foster home during the reporting month.
- The Subrecipient will separate direct foster care maintenance payments from other service delivery expenses and keep records that are readily reviewable and traceable to source documentation, in a format approved by Saint Francis, including, but not limited to, payments to foster parents by check, electronic funds transfers, or other payment methods.
- The contractor will be responsible for reporting outcome data to Saint Francis via the current identified process by the 10th of each following month.

STAFF CREDENTIALS

All new Contractor staff hired to provide direct services to the Short Term Foster Care foster families and to foster children and their families, shall have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in a human services related field; or, a Bachelor's Degree in a related field with experience delivering foster care related services.

At the Subrecipient's request, Saint Francis may consider a potential employee's High School Diploma or GED and at least 5 years of job related or lived experience to be the equivalent of a bachelor's degree for the performance of Short Term Foster Care duties.

If an employee does not meet the standards outlined above, the Contractor shall notify the Saint Francis Provider Relations Department, and provide the name of the employee, their job function, and education deficiencies which prevent them from meeting the contractual standards. This will be reviewed for an Educational Exception which the Contractor will document in their HR file.

The Contractor shall have a written, detailed training plan for Short Term Foster Care staff that includes both pre-service and ongoing training requirements. The Contractor will provide their staff with access to training in Well Supported, Supported, or Promising Practices in alignment with the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018, from which to establish a foundation from the appropriate teaching. The Contractor shall make the training plan available to Saint Francis upon request.

PERFORMANCE OUTCOME MEASURES

Contractors are responsible for reporting outcome data to Saint Francis Ministries via the current identified process by the 10th calendar day of the following month.

- 75% of youth served will discharge to an ongoing placement.
- 100% of youth served will not experience maltreatment or care concerns that would result in the removal from the foster home.

ESTABLISHED RATE

1. Saint Francis will pay for Short-Term Foster Care at a rate of \$100 per calendar day to the Contractor. The Contractor shall provide a daily rate to the foster parent that is consistent with the youth's needs and the care provided by the foster parent.

2. All other related service costs are included in the established rate. No additional costs will be paid by Saint Francis.

Saint Francis reserves the right to change the foster care rates in accordance with the range of rates identified by Nebraska law.