

**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

The EDGE Program

**Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement Program
for Transition-Aged Students who are Blind or Vision Impaired**

Proposal Due: October 3, 2014

Date of Issuance: August 22, 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Background	3
Definitions and Eligibility for CBVI Services	4
Funding	5
Contracted Provider Eligibility	5
Service Areas and Population	6
Primary Program Objectives	7
Mandatory Bidder's/Technical Assistance Workshop	12
Proposal Submission Information	13
The Proposal	13
Fiscal Stability	15
Confidentiality	15
Required Documentation	16
Deadlines	17
Proposal Schedule	17
Proposal Review Process	18
Proposal Evaluation Scoring	18
Protest Process	18
Post Award Requirements	18
Attachments	21

Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement Program for Transition-Aged Students who are Blind or Vision Impaired

INTRODUCTION

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI), Department of Human Services, is pleased to announce the development of a program for transition-aged (14-21) high school students served by CBVI. The contracted provider is charged with the task of developing and implementing a curriculum of activities that promote independence and self-awareness in preparation for employment and transition to adulthood. The contract is scheduled to begin on December 1, 2014, and end on November 30, 2015. Contract success and renewal is anticipated, dependent upon programmatic outcomes that address client needs and availability of funds. No guarantee is made here, however, that the contract resulting from this RFP will be renewed.

CBVI is seeking to develop a contract with one (1) provider, including community-based organizations; public or private colleges or universities; public agencies, including those of county or state government; and any other institutions, associations, businesses, or other entities (profit or not-for-profit) that are eligible to provide services in New Jersey and can demonstrate an ability to deliver the required services as outlined in this document. The contracted provider agency will coordinate services to the CBVI on a statewide basis, covering twenty-one (21) counties.

BACKGROUND

CBVI is the Designated State Unit (DSU) in New Jersey responsible for providing a full range of services to individuals who are blind or vision-impaired to facilitate their integration into the mainstream of social and economic life. The agency's mission is to assist blind or vision-impaired citizens to realize their full potential by developing skills of independence and securing employment. CBVI recognizes three (3) major thrusts in carrying out this mission: (1) providing specialized services to blind or vision-impaired people; (2) educating and working in the community to reduce the incidence of vision loss; and (3) improving attitudes of the general public toward and concerning this population.

CBVI provides Education Services from birth through age twenty-one (21) to eligible children and their families. These services are designed to enable students who are blind or vision-impaired to integrate and participate with their sighted peers in regular classroom activities. CBVI also offers special services to students with complex disabilities, as well as students with vision and hearing loss, to address their special education needs related to blindness or vision-impairment. Services include assessing a student's abilities, consulting with family members, offering guidance to staff and therapists, and providing adaptive equipment and materials through the CBVI George F. Meyer Instructional Resource Center to accommodate the student's needs in the classroom.

Vocational rehabilitation services at CBVI assist adults who are blind or vision-impaired with acquisition or retraining to secure and maintain employment in the labor force, operation of a business, provision of supportive employment services, and/or management of their own homes. These individuals include young adults transitioning from high school to work or college, students attending college, those adjusting to vision loss, unemployed workers, and individuals in job jeopardy due to vision loss.

DEFINITIONS AND ELIGIBILITY FOR CBVI SERVICES

LEGAL BLINDNESS: Visual acuity of 20/200 or less with best correction in the better eye or a field loss that reduces peripheral vision to 20 degrees or less.

VISION IMPAIRMENT: Visual acuity of 20/70 or less in the better eye with best correction better than 20/200, or a visual field loss between 20 and 40 degrees or additional restriction in peripheral vision.

ELIGIBILITY FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES: Eligibility is based on substantial impediments to employment due to visual acuity of 20/70 in the better eye with best correction; peripheral field loss between 20 and 40 degrees; or visual acuity of 20/70 or higher in the better eye with best correction due to a progressive eye condition. In addition, the applicant must benefit in terms of an employment outcome from services. Individuals who are recipients of SSI or SSDI benefits are considered to be an individual with a significant disability, and are presumed eligible, provided that, with informed choice, those individuals are interested in achieving an employment outcome, consistent with their unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, and interests; and require vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, enter into, engage in, or retain employment.

ELIGIBILITY FOR EDUCATION SERVICES: The Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, as amended by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. §1413(a)(12), is the Federal statute guaranteeing students with disabilities, ages three through twenty-one (3-21), a "free appropriate public education emphasizing special education and related services." IDEA regulations apply to all agencies having direct or delegated authority to provide education services to students with disabilities regardless of whether or not they receive funds under the Act. In New Jersey, such agencies include the New Jersey Department of Education, Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Both regular and special education students with best corrected visual acuity of 20/70 or less in their better eye with correction and children with severe visual field loss are eligible for educational services. For very young children, and children with significant complex disabilities, diagnosis of visual impairment may be prescribed by a medical doctor. Students must be twenty-one (21) years of age or younger, not completed secondary school, and meet State of New Jersey residency requirements.

The majority of students eligible for CBVI services attend school with their sighted peers and receive blindness and visual impairment related services by a State-certified

Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired employed by CBVI. The teacher visits the school and works directly with the student and his/her teachers and parents.

CBVI also provides specialized services to address the needs of blind or vision impaired students with complex disabilities and students with vision impairment and hearing loss. Many of these students attend specialized schools, medical facilities, or are in classrooms with students with similar classifications. Certified teachers of the vision impaired consult with family members, teachers, therapists, and Child Study Team members to assess students' educational/learning needs. Adaptive equipment and materials are provided to enable students to better meet their educational/learning needs in the classroom and other environments, including the home.

FUNDING

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) awards Federal Public Vocational Rehabilitation Funds via the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which are allocated for vocational rehabilitation clients.

This RFP is for a cost-related contract, as discussed in the Department of Human Services Contract Reimbursement Manual (CRM3.3). Contract funds will be awarded for the period of December 1, 2014, through November 30, 2015. It is anticipated that the resulting contract will be approximately **\$200,000.00**. The contracted provider agency will serve all regions of the State of New Jersey that correlate with CBVI service areas.

This contract will be for one (1) year only. Contract renewal is possible, dependent upon program success, client needs, and availability of funds.

CONTRACTED PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY

Providers eligible to provide services in New Jersey must demonstrate a financial and programmatic ability to deliver the required services as outlined in this document. Such providers must also adequately address the career development and adjustment needs of transitioning high school students who are vision-impaired or blind.

The applicant must document in its response to this RFP that the organization has:

1. Experience providing vocational and independent living services to adults and youth, aged 14-21 years, who have multiple disabilities;
2. Ability to organize and integrate individual and group activities for program participants;
3. Ability to interact and work closely with CBVI staff, including Transition Counselors and Teachers of the Blind and Visually Impaired;
4. Ability to work cooperatively with employers, school districts, teachers, and others while providing services to referred clients upon request by CBVI;

5. Ability to provide required reports and any other data in a digital format to CBVI staff on a regular, organized, and recurring basis, but no later than five (5) business days from the scheduled due date. The provider must use reporting forms provided by CBVI and these forms will be sent via email unless other arrangements are agreed upon between the parties.
6. The following CBVI staff members must be copied on all reports:
 - a. Coordinator of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
 - b. EDGE Program Coordinator
 - c. Contract Administrator
7. Ability to provide the proposed services to the target population by demonstrating a satisfactory experience record, adequate resources, and qualifications of staff;
8. Has current knowledge and experience with implementation of all required services to be rendered;
9. Demonstrates suitable qualifications of staff proposed to administer the program;
10. Ability to serve non-English speaking clients, including individuals who are deaf-blind and use American Sign Language as their primary mode of communication;
11. Access to and familiar with services in the counties to be served;
12. Capacity to implement and manage the required programs to the target population;
13. Ability to maintain confidentiality of records and client information per the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA); and,
14. Ability to comply with the terms and conditions of the Department of Human Services' rules and regulations as specified in the Standard Language Document and the DHS Contract Policy and Information Manual (CPIM) and the Contract Reimbursement Manual (CRM) on the DHS website at <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ocpm/home/resources/manuals/>.

SERVICE AREAS AND POPULATION

The chosen provider shall provide services to CBVI consumers who are eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, are current students in high school or other secondary program, and are served via the three (3) service centers listed below. Numbers shown in 1, 2 and 3 below reflect the total number of potential candidates for the program during the prior year in each region of the State. Proposals should be submitted to accommodate serving a minimum of thirty (30) and a maximum of sixty (60) students aged fourteen to twenty-one (14-21) years old in a contract year.

1. Newark Service Center (NSC): Serves individuals who live in the following counties: Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Passaic, Sussex and Warren.

Consumers receiving transition services in FFY¹ 2013: 170

2. Freehold Service Center (FSC): Serves individuals who live in the following counties: Monmouth, Ocean, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Somerset and Union.

Consumers receiving transition services in FFY 2013: 196

3. Cherry Hill Service Center (CHSC): Serves individuals who live in the following counties: Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem.

Consumers receiving transition services in FFY 2013: 112

PRIMARY PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

EDGE: Employment, Development, Guidance, & Engagement

Employment – The emphasis of the program is to prepare students to secure year-round, community-based, integrated work experiences while still in high school to introduce them to the workplace and allow them, with proper guidance and mentoring, to be successful in this area of their life. Early work experiences have been shown to help create a number of skills that can be used in adulthood to further career opportunities.

Development – Focus in this facet of the program will be on the acquisition and use of skills of independence to promote confident living in community, academic, and work environments. Students, who can effectively manage their age-appropriate personal affairs and home environments, travel comfortably in their communities, and access information technologies are more likely to be ready for post-secondary education and employment outcomes.

Guidance – Mentoring by peers and employed blind adults plays a critical role in providing invaluable insights and supports for students to learn how to function within academic, community, and employment settings as blind or vision-impaired individuals. One-on-one and group mentoring needs to be developed, monitored, and nurtured to ensure supportive environments that encourage personal growth.

Engagement -- The EDGE program must create an environment that requires its participants to be fully engaged in an attitude of life-long learning and personal development. Goal attainment and personal achievement is possible when one is emotionally invested and committed to whatever one hopes to accomplish. Attitudinal barriers and misperceptions about blindness must be confronted through thoughtful dialogue among program peers and administrators and via challenging group activities to build confidence and encourage students to reach their potential.

¹ The Federal fiscal year (FFY) runs from October 1st through September 30th.

The EDGE program will be a year-round program serving consumers who are receiving Transition Services from CBVI. The provider must ensure participants develop and use skills of independence (travel, personal management, technology, interpersonal communication, problem solving, advocacy, and self-awareness) through engaging in community-based activities to develop career awareness in preparation for employment. Further, the provider shall engage participants in community work experiences to practice and further develop skills of independence, and to acquire general work skills. Levels of work-related opportunities organized by the provider shall include, but not be limited to:

- job shadowing (no stipend);
- volunteer in a community setting (travel stipend);
- unpaid work experience (job sampling/internship) (travel stipend plus a bonus);
- summer paid work experience (travel stipend + award recognition); and
- part-time/year round employment (travel stipend + award recognition).

CBVI Transition Counselors will assist consumers of the EDGE program with job development activities for paid work experiences included in participants Individualized Plans for Employment (IPE). In addition, the Counselors will include travel stipends in students' IPEs and arrange for payment to facilitate work experiences in the community. Counselors will assist participants to establish IPE employment goals by age sixteen (16).

Service Population

1. A minimum of thirty (30) and maximum of sixty (60) transition-aged, high school students under CBVI sponsorship ages fourteen to twenty-one that are eligible for vocational rehabilitation services;
2. Students demonstrating the potential to improve skills of independence and access employment; and
3. Individuals with diverse disabilities, co-existing with blindness or vision impairment, e.g. those with mobility devices such as wheelchairs, complex medical needs, and deaf-blind students.

Program Referral Protocols

1. CBVI Transition Counselors, in collaboration with Teachers of the Blind and Visually Impaired, will recommend appropriate students to participate in the program.
2. CBVI will mail applications to parents of perspective participants.
3. Applications returned will be reviewed and recorded by the EDGE Program Coordinator.
4. Students will be referred directly to the contracted provider via an interagency referral form.

5. Upon receipt of an initial referral from CBVI, the contract provider will email the CBVI Transition Counselor and Program Coordinator, providing contact information and a date for a proposed first contact with the student.
6. The contract provider will engage parents and the students to begin participation in the Program.

Contract Provider Agency Terms of Services

1. Students will be assigned to a Regional Coordinator, who will arrange for students to engage in program activities individually or in small groups that promote the objectives of the EDGE program.
2. The contracted provider must work within student schedules, necessitating evening, after-school, and weekend hours as needed.
3. Any additional services performed outside of the terms of the contract must be directed to the Program Coordinator, such as:
 - a. Providing reports to any parties other than CBVI;
 - b. Providing consultative or evaluative services to the employer, school, family, or any other third party; and
 - c. Attending IEP/504 meetings or any other educational/employment planning meetings with any other third party.
4. The successful contractor must sign a Business Associates Agreement (BAA) in compliance with HIPAA to assure confidentiality of Protected Health Information (PHI).
5. The contract provider is required to insure the following programmatic safeguards are implemented, and produce documentation upon request by the CBVI's EDGE Program Coordinator:
 - a. Criminal History Background Investigations shall be conducted for those employees of provider who have direct contact with the persons served by the provider. Such employees include, but are not limited to, consultants, interns, and seasonal employees (N.J.S.A 30:6D-63 to 72 and N.J.A.C. 10:48A-2.1);
 - b. All individuals who transport participants must provide proof of driver's license and insurance coverage on an annual basis; and
 - c. Provider staff and volunteers are required to adhere to the rule of at least two (2) adults accompanying students at all times in transport vehicles, trips, meetings, group activities, etc.

Program Activities

The contract provider is charged with developing a curriculum that addresses the following areas:

1. Self-Awareness that promotes the participant's self-awareness about disabilities and fosters positive attitudes toward blindness, including assertiveness techniques to facilitate self-advocacy and to communicate effectively to others about alternative methods used on a daily basis and solution-based methods for interacting in the workplace.
2. Skills of independence that enable participants to learn about and improve their skills in the following areas:
 - Safe, independent travel;
 - Personal management;
 - Information/access technology; and
 - Literacy skills, i.e. use of Braille, large print, or other media as appropriate.
3. Career Awareness Activities that enable participants to increase their awareness of employment protocols, develop soft skills, and job seeking skills.
4. Peer-to-peer supports (social activities that are age-appropriate).
5. Mentoring, with the opportunity to interact with adults with vision loss who are successfully employed in a variety of occupations. These interactions must include group discussions on strategies for managing everyday tasks and negotiating the work environment. Successes, challenges and methods for overcoming obstacles shall be highlighted to provide problem solving strategies. Mentors must also engage students in activities to develop self-esteem, independence and employability skills. Two (2) adults must be present at all times during mentoring activities. The successful contract provider shall design mentoring protocols and provide training for individuals who are selected to serve as mentors.

Parent Engagement/Training

1. The contract provider shall develop a training curriculum to engage parents of program participants to learn about activities that promote independence. This may include, but is not limited to, development of a checklist of activities for parents to perform at home with students to facilitate their independence including: household chores; clothing management; meal preparation; and negotiating public transportation.
2. Encourage parents to volunteer to support the program and learn skills to carry over to the home environment.

Benchmarks for Measuring Success

Milestone/outcome measurements will be applied to monitor the achievement of benchmarks for the program. A Pre-test/Post-test model will be applied to provide evidence-based measures of efficacy as a gauge of program success.

Program Milestone Measurements

1st year of High School: Students will receive an Initial skills assessment by CBVI team to record baseline skills of independence. This will include a brief self-assessment survey to be completed by the participant and parent/guardian.

2nd year of High School: A second self-assessment survey will be completed by the participant and parent/guardian to assess level of awareness of skills of independence and employment.

3rd year of High School: CBVI team will conduct an Intermediate skills evaluation and the participant will complete a self-assessment survey.

- Students will begin community work experiences.
- Career interests and skill potential will be assessed to identify a preliminary career goal and develop the IPE.
- Students will receive lessons for navigating public transportation.

Final year of High School: Final assessment by CBVI Team and student self-assessment prior to graduation. All students must engage in community work experience to complete the program. Incentives for students to participate in paid work experiences should be offered. For students remaining in high-school to age 21, an additional assessment will occur prior to the student aging out of secondary education.

CBVI/Contract Provider Collaboration

1. The contract provider must develop a regular schedule of structured/focused communication with CBVI administration and the Contract Administrator to insure proper oversight of implementation of program activities and meeting the terms of the contract.
2. The contract provider shall provide CBVI Transition Counselors with progress updates and work collaboratively to address student concerns and student program compliance.
3. Monthly reports submitted to program and the Contract Administrator must provide a detailed account of specific program activities for all participants. Activities listed must be consistent with the core components of the program: employment; independent living; travel skills; and mentoring relationships. Documentation of each activity must include total number of hours, total number of participants, and identify each participant by name. Reports must reference:
 - A. Participant's level of skill development toward the achievement of program milestone outcomes; and

B. All participants' potential to engage in CBVI-sponsored transition programs.

General Contracting Information

The Department reserves the right to reject any and all proposals when circumstances indicate that it is in its best interest to do so. The Department's best interests in this context include, but are not limited to, State loss of funding for the contract, insufficient infrastructure agency wide, inability of the applicant to provide adequate services, indication of misrepresentation of information and/or non-compliance with any existing Department contracts and procedures or State and/or Federal laws and regulations.

All proposals are considered public information and as such will be made available upon request after the completion of the RFP process.

All applicants will be required to comply with the Affirmative Action requirements of P.L. 1975 c. 127 (N.J.A.C. 17:27), P.L. 2005, c.51 and 271, Executive Order 117 and N.J.S.A. 52:34-13-2 Source Disclosure Certification (replaces Executive Order 129).

Awardee will be required to comply with the DHS contracting rules and regulations, including the Standard Language Document, the Department of Human Services' Contract Reimbursement Manual, and the Contract Policy and Information Manual. Manuals may be downloaded from the DHS website of the Office of Contract Policy and Management

at: <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ocpm/home/resources/manuals/index.html>.

The awardee will be required to negotiate contract with DHS/CBVI upon award, and may also be subject to a pre-award audit survey.

Funds may only be used to support services that are specific to this award; hence, this funding may not be used to supplant or duplicate existing funding streams. Contractees are expected to adhere to all applicable State and Federal cost principles. Budgets should be reasonable and reflect the scope of responsibilities in order to accomplish the goals of this project.

OBTAINING THE PROPOSAL PACKAGE

A copy of the Request for Proposal (RFP) is available on the New Jersey Department of Human Services web site at <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/providers/grants>.

MANDATORY BIDDERS/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WORKSHOP

The **mandatory** Bidders/Technical Assistance Workshop will be held on **September 10, 2014** at the George F. Meyer Instructional Resource Center, located at 375 McCarter Highway, Newark, NJ 07114, at 10:00 a.m. **In order to submit a proposal, an agency representative MUST be in attendance.** Advance registration for the workshop is required by calling (973) 648-7416 or (973) 648-3333.

The workshop will give potential applicants an opportunity to learn more about CBVI, the proposed program, RFP requirements and proposal preparation. All Technical Assistance questions must be sent via e-mail to kevin.harris@dhs.state.nj.us by the close-of-business the Friday before the Mandatory Bidders/Technical Assistance

Workshop. Subsequent to the workshop, questions will be answered by the State in writing and distributed only to potential providers properly registered and in attendance at the workshop.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION INFORMATION

The proposal narrative should be clearly written, concise, and sequentially address the proposal content described below, i.e., “Organization Mission and Goals” through “Confidentiality”. The proposal narrative must be typed on one side of the page, with pages numbered and utilizing no smaller than a 12-point font for the proposal content. The proposal package must consist of the funding proposal cover sheet, proposal narrative, followed by additional requested documentation and information. Letters of support and cooperation, copies of agreements or other materials may be included to verify the potential provider's level of collaboration, experience and interaction with the community.

The potential provider must submit one (1) complete, signed original proposal package as detailed above plus six (6) exact copies for use by the State's selection review committee. **The potential provider shall also submit a copy of the proposal on CD,DVD, or Thumb Drive to accommodate potential reviewers who do not read print.** Documents on the CD or DVD shall be in PDF form (Adobe Corporation's portable document format).

The proposal may be submitted via courier, mail or in person to the address shown below. **The proposal package must reach CBVI by the deadline date and time indicated. Late submissions will not be reviewed by CBVI.**

THE PROPOSAL

Proposals must include the following information in a narrative format:

1. **Organization Mission and Goals:** A brief description of agency mission, history, purposes, and goals. If a cooperative or consortium is proposing, then information must be provided for each participating entity.
2. **Organizational Experience:**
 - a. Identify the experiences of the agency in providing vocational and independent living services to the target populations: transition high school students who are blind or vision-impaired, who may have additional disabilities.
 - b. Indicate the agency's knowledge of community needs and range of services provided throughout the State of New Jersey.
 - c. Indicate how the organization has fulfilled other contracted programs and outline past contractual experiences with the State of New Jersey (if appropriate) or other contracted entity(ies).

- d. Describe how the organization is able to provide the required services to the target population by documenting a satisfactory past history, adequate resources, financial stability and qualifications of staff.

3. Program/Service Design:

- a. Provide an overview of the proposed program design, services, activities and staff for accomplishing the objectives stated under Primary Program Objectives section of this document.
- b. Detail how the potential provider will organize and coordinate the service provisions including assessments and program activities.
- c. Describe how the organization will collaborate with CBVI transition counselors and administrative staff. Illustrate the agency's ability to work cooperatively with employers, school districts, teachers, and community providers in conjunction with the provision of service activities. Detail protocols the organization will implement for submitting reports and relevant data to CBVI on a regular, organized and recurring basis.
- d. Provide an account of the specific assessment and program activities that will be offered to transition students, students with complex disabilities, and students who are deaf-blind.
- e. Describe the proposed intake and evaluation procedures. Include samples of reports and professional best practices that the agency has used in the past.
- f. Describe the methods proposed to measure and evaluate participant progress toward goals.

4. Time Frames and Project Implementation:

- a. Provide an estimated timeframe for project implementation in the event the agency is awarded the contract.
- b. Provide a summary of the timelines and specific steps the agency will carry out to fully implement the program according to CBVI requirements. This must include at a minimum outreach, technical assistance, working with CBVI staff, hiring additional staff, and other steps that may be necessary.

5. Staffing:

- a. Describe process to ensure criminal history background investigations will be conducted for those employees of agencies under contract with CBVI, working in such contracted programs, who have direct contact with the persons served by the agency. Such employees include, but are not

limited to, consultants, interns, volunteers, and seasonal employees (N.J.S.A. 30:6D-63 to 72 and N.J.A.C. 10:48A-2.1). . Provider is responsible for obtaining and maintaining criminal history records, and these records are subject to inspection by CBVI Contract Administrator upon request. Provider may charge the cost of criminal history background investigations as an expense under the contract for services.

- b. Describe appropriate qualifications of staff providing the services.
- c. Explain the capability of staff to serve culturally and linguistically diverse clients.
- d. Provide information regarding which staff will perform each service activity listed above.
- e. Provide an organizational chart to include staff names, job titles, and job locations.
- f. Provide job descriptions, qualifications, experience of all staff who will provide the direct client services, and of the supervisory and management personnel of the proposed program.
- g. Include management and supervision methods that will be used in the operation and procedures for monitoring staff performance of the service activities.
- h. If additional staff is to be hired, indicate qualifications for the new hires and the orientation/training protocols.

FISCAL STABILITY

The applicant must submit a copy of its 2012 and 2013 audited Financial Reports. An up-to-date financial summary is necessary to establish the financial stability of an organization under consideration for the contract, as strong financial stability is required of the successful provider.

CONFIDENTIALITY

CBVI is a covered entity pursuant to HIPAA. Before a contracted provider obtains or is permitted to access, create, maintain, or store PHI as part of its responsibility under the contract resulting from this RFP, the provider shall first execute a Department of Human Services Business Associate Agreement (BAA). A provider whose work under the contract resulting from this RFP does not involve PHI is not required to execute a BAA. The Department of Human Services shall have the sole discretion to determine when a provider's work will involve PHI. Protected Health Insurance shall have the same meaning as in 45 CFR 160.103.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

1. The proposal must include:
 - a. Cover letter of transmittal signed by CEO or Agency/Organization Director.
 - b. Abstract that provides a one page summary of program design and program activities as described in the proposal including the overall funding request.
 - c. Narrative in response to the RFP limited to 10 pages.
 - d. Current organizational chart.
 - e. Most recent organization-wide financial and programmatic audits.
 - f. Project budget utilizing the Application for Contract Funds, download at <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/das/information/contracts/DASConstructContrApp.doc>.
 - g. Applicant's code of ethics and/or conflict of interest policy (Executive Order No. 189).
 - h. Affirmative action certificate of employee information report and /or newly completed AA 302 form, download at: <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/das/information/contracts/AA%20form-302.pdf>.
 - i. Confidentiality Policy.
 - j. Current list of board of directors, officers, and terms of office of each.
 - k. Documentation of charitable registration status and business registration.
 - l. Copy of certification of incorporation.
 - m. Original and/or copies of letters of commitment from the organizations collaborators.
 - n. Signed and Dated Debarment Certification Statement (attached).
 - o. N.J.S.A. 34-13.2 Source Disclosure Certification Form (replaces Executive Order 129 Form).
 - p. IRS Form 990 or 1120.
 - q. Signed Business Associate Agreement (BAA).

- r. Statement of Assurances properly signed by the CEO or equivalent (Policy Circular P1.04, Attachment B).

2. RFP Attachments

- a. Funding Proposal Cover Sheet
- b. Annex B-2
- c. Executive Order No. 189
- d. Certificate Regarding Debarment
- e. Department of Human Services Standard Language Document
- f. Required Forms

DEADLINES

Proposals are due by **October 3, 2014 by 4:30 p.m Eastern time**. After this date and time, **no applications will be accepted**. Proposals may be couriered or mailed to:

Kevin Harris
New Jersey Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired
153 Halsey Street, PO Box 47017
Newark, NJ 07101

Proposals may also be hand delivered to:

New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
153 Halsey Street, 6th Floor
Newark, New Jersey 07101

No e-mail or facsimile submissions will be accepted. Proposals will be evaluated and contract announcements will be made by **November 3, 2014**. The program will begin development and implementation phases by Monday, December 1, 2014.

PROPOSAL SCHEDULE

August 22, 2014	Notice of Availability of Funds
September 10, 2014	Mandatory Bidder's/Technical Assistance Workshop
October 3, 2014	Deadline for receipt of proposals –no later than 4:30 pm
October 24, 2014	Decision letters sent to all applicants

October 24, 2014	Preliminary award announcement
October 31, 2014	Deadline for appeal of award decision
November 3, 2014	Final award announcement
December 1, 2014	Anticipated award start date

PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS

A review panel of at least five (5) State employees will assess, rate, and rank proposals to recommend for funding. The proposals will be evaluated to ensure satisfactory documentation, capability, clarity, reasonableness and consistency with the needs and requirements of the RFP. The panel will be broadly representative and culturally diverse, and no panel member will have any interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect investment, in the result of the panel's evaluations. Recommendations of the panel are regarded as confidential until the awards are publicly announced.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION SCORING

The proposals will be evaluated using the 100 point rating scale distributed across the following criteria, not necessarily listed in order of importance:

Financial Stability
 Program Service Design
 Qualifications of Staff
 Experience of Organization
 Program Implementation and Start-up

PROTEST PROCESS

An entity seeking to challenge the rejection of its proposal must do so within seven (7) days of the issuance of the notice of intent to award. The challenge must be in writing and must clearly state the factual basis for the protest. The challenge along with any other relevant information must be sent to the Office of the Executive Director of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, 153 Halsey Street, P O Box 47017, Newark, NJ 07101.

POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS

A) Documentation

Upon award announcement, the successful applicant must submit one (1) copy of the following documentation (if not already submitted with the proposal) in order to process the contract in a timely manner:

1. Proof of insurance;
2. Board Resolution authorizing who is approved for entering into a contract and signing related contract documents;

3. Two (2) signed originals of the Department of Human Services Standard Language Document;
4. Current Agency By-laws;
5. Current Personnel Manual or Employee Handbook;
6. Copy of Lease or Mortgage;
7. Certificate of Incorporation;
8. Conflict of Interest Policy;
9. Affirmative Action Policy;
10. Affirmative Action Certificate of Employee Information Report and/or newly completed AA 302 form (AA Certificate must be submitted within 60 days of submitting completed AA302 form to Office of Contract Compliance);
11. A copy of all applicable licenses;
12. Local Certificates of Occupancy;
13. Most recent State of New Jersey Business Registration;
14. Procurement Policy;
15. Current Equipment inventory of items purchased with DHS funds (Note: the inventory shall include: a description of the item, a State identifying number or code, original date of purchase, date of receipt, location at the Provider Agency, person(s) assigned to the equipment, etc.);
16. All Subcontracts or Consultant Agreements, related to the DHS Contracts, signed and dated by both parties;
17. Business Associate Agreement (BAA) for Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act of 1996 compliance, if applicable, signed and dated;
18. Updated single audit report (A133) or certified statements, if differs from one submitted with proposal;
19. Updated IRS Form 990, if differs from one submitted with proposal;
20. Updated Pension Form 5500, if applicable, if differs from one submitted with proposal;
21. Copy of Annual Report;
22. N.J.S.A. 52:34-13.2 Source Disclosure Certification form (replaces Executive Order 129 compliance forms);
23. Disclosure of Investment in Iran (attached to the RFP);
24. Department of Human Services Statement of Assurances (attached to the RFP);
25. and
26. Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion Lower Tier Covered Transactions (attached to the RFP).

B) Award Requirements

Awardee must adhere to the following:

1. Enter into a contract with CBVI and comply with applicable DHS and CBVI contracting rules and regulations;
2. Comply with all applicable State and Federal assurances, certifications and regulations regarding the use of these funds;
3. Inform the Program Management Officer of any publications/publicity based on the award;
4. Comply with all appropriate State licensure regulations; and
5. Comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.

C) Other Information

1. CBVI may provide post contract support to awardee through technical assistance; and
2. CBVI Program Coordinator and/or Contract Administrator will conduct site visits to monitor the progress in accomplishing responsibilities and corresponding strategy for overcoming these problems. An awardee's failure to comply with reporting requirements may result in loss of the contract. The awardee will receive a written report of the site visit findings and will be expected to submit a plan of correction.

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

**ADDENDUM TO REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
FOR SOCIAL SERVICE AND TRAINING CONTRACTS**

Executive Order No. 189 establishes the expected standard of responsibility for all parties that enter into a contract with the State of New Jersey. All such parties must meet a standard of responsibility which assures the State and its citizens that such parties will compete and perform honestly in their dealings with the State and avoid conflicts of interest.

As used in this document "provider agency" or "provider" means any person, firm, corporation, or other entity or representative or employee thereof which offers or proposes to provide goods or services to or performs any contract for the Department of Human Services.

In compliance with Paragraph 3 of Executive Order No. 189, no provider agency shall pay, offer to pay, or agree to pay, either directly or indirectly, any fee, commission, compensation, gift, gratuity, or other thing of value of any kind to any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee, as defined by N.J.S.A. 52:13D-13b and e, in the Department of the Treasury or any other agency with which such provider agency transacts or offers or proposes to transact business, or to any member of the immediate family, as defined by N.J.S.A. 52:13D-13i, of any such officer or employee, or any partnership, firm, or corporation with which they are employed or associated, or in which such officer or employee has an interest within the meaning of N.J.S.A. 52:13D-13g.

The solicitation of any fee, commission, compensation, gift, gratuity or other thing of value by any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee from any provider agency shall be reported in writing forthwith by the provider agency to the Attorney General and the Executive Commission on Ethical Standards.

No provider agency may, directly or indirectly, undertake any private business, commercial or entrepreneurial relationship with, whether or not pursuant to employment, contract or other agreement, express or implied, or sell any interest in such provider agency to, any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee having any duties or responsibilities in connection with the purchase, acquisition or sale of any property or services by or to any State agency or any instrumentality thereof, or with any person, firm or entity with which he is employed or associated or in which he has an interest within the meaning of N.J.S.A. 52:13D-13g. Any relationships subject to this provision shall be reported in writing forthwith to the Executive Commission on Ethical Standards, which may grant a waiver of this restriction upon application of the State officer or employee or special State officer or employee upon a finding that the present or proposed relationship does not present the potential, actuality or appearance of a conflict of interest.

No provider agency shall influence, or attempt to influence or cause to be influenced, any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee in his 24

official capacity in any manner which might tend to impair the objectivity or independence of judgment of said officer or employee.

No provider agency shall cause or influence, or attempt to cause or influence, any State officer or employee or special State officer or employee to use, or attempt to use, his official position to secure unwarranted privileges or advantages for the provider agency or any other person.

The provisions cited above shall not be construed to prohibit a State officer or employee or special State officer or employee from receiving gifts from or contracting with provider agencies under the same terms and conditions as are offered or made available to members of the general public subject to any guidelines the Executive Commission on Ethical Standards may promulgate.

**Department of Human Services
Statement of Assurances**

As the duly authorized Chief Executive Officer/Administrator, I am aware that submission to the Department of Human Services of the accompanying application constitutes the creation of a public document and as such may be made available upon request at the completion of the RFP process. This may include the application, budget, and list of applicants (bidder's list). In addition, I certify that the applicant:

- Has legal authority to apply for the funds made available under the requirements of the RFP, and has the institutional, managerial and financial capacity (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal/State share of project costs, as appropriate) to ensure proper planning, management and completion of the project described in this application.
- Will give the New Jersey Department of Human Services, or its authorized representatives, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Will give proper notice to the independent auditor that DHS will rely upon the fiscal year end audit report to demonstrate compliance with the terms of the contract.
- Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain. This means that the applicant did not have any involvement in the preparation of the RFP, including development of specifications, requirements, statement of works, or the evaluation of the RFP applications/bids.
- Will comply with all federal and State statutes and regulations relating to non-discrimination. These include but are not limited to: 1.) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352; 34 CFR Part 100) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin; 2.) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794; 34 CFR Part 104), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 42 U.S.C. 12101 et. seq.; 3.) Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101 et. seq.; 45 CFR part 90), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; 4.) P.L. 2975, Chapter 127, of the State of New Jersey (N.J.S.A. 10:5-31 et. seq.) and associated executive orders pertaining to affirmative action and non-discrimination on public contracts; 5.) federal Equal Employment Opportunities Act; and 6.) Affirmative Action Requirements of PL 1975 c. 127 (NJAC 17:27).
- Will comply with all applicable federal and State laws and regulations.

- Will comply with the Davis-Bacon Act, 40 U.S.C. 276a-276a-5 (29 CFR 5.5) and the New Jersey Prevailing Wage Act, N.J.S.A. 34:11-56.27 et. seq. and all regulations pertaining thereto.
- Is in compliance, for all contracts in excess of \$100,000, with the Byrd Anti-Lobbying amendment, incorporated at Title 31 U.S.C. 1352. This certification extends to all lower tier subcontracts as well.
- Has included a statement of explanation regarding any and all involvement in any litigation, criminal or civil.
- Has signed the certification in compliance with federal Executive Orders 12549 and 12689 and State Executive Order 34 and is not presently debarred, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded. Will have on file signed certifications for all subcontracted funds.
- Understands that this provider agency is an independent, private employer with all the rights and obligations of such, and is not a political subdivision of the Department of Human Services.
- Understands that unresolved monies owed the Department and/or the State of New Jersey may preclude the receipt of this award.

Applicant Organization

Signature: Chief Executive Officer or Equivalent

Date

Typed Name and Title

6/97

READ THE ATTACHED INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE SIGNING THIS CERTIFICATION.
THE INSTRUCTIONS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE CERTIFICATION.

**Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion
Lower Tier Covered Transactions**

1. The prospective lower tier participant certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by an Federal department or agency.

2. Where the prospective lower tier participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

Name and Title of Authorized Representative

Signature Date

This certification is required by the regulations implementing Executive order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 29 CFR Part 98, Section 98.51028

Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion Lower Tier Covered Transactions

Instructions for Certification

1. By signing and submitting this proposal, the prospective lower tier participant is providing the certification set out below.
2. The certification in this clause is a material representation of facts upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was entered into. If it is later determined that the prospective lower tier participant knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.
3. The prospective lower tier participant shall provide immediate written notice to the person to which this proposal is submitted if at any time the prospective lower tier participant learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or had become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.
4. The terms covered transaction, debarred, suspended, ineligible, lower tier covered transaction, participant, person, primary covered transaction, principal, proposal, and voluntarily excluded, as used in this clause, have the meaning set out in the Definitions and Coverage sections of rules implementing Executive Order 12549. You may contact the person to which this proposal is submitted for assistance in obtaining a copy of those regulations.
5. The prospective lower tier participant agrees by submitting this proposal that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by the department or agency with which this transaction originated.
6. The prospective lower tier participant further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include this clause titled "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion--Lower Tier Covered Transaction," without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions.²⁹

7. A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that it is not proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions, unless it knows that the certification is erroneous. A participant may decide the method and frequency by which it determines the eligibility of its principals. Each participant may, but is not required to, check the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Nonprocurement Programs.

8. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the certification required by this clause. The knowledge and information of a participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.

9. Except for transactions authorized under paragraph 5 of these instructions, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly enters into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment. Contract Reimbursement Manual 5.3 30

Related Organization Schedule

Report on this schedule any budgeted or actual purchases from related organizations. A related organization is one under which one party is able to control or influence substantially the actions of the other. Such relationships include but are not limited to those between (1) divisions of an organization; (2) organizations under common control through common officers, directors, or members, and (3) an organization and a director, trustee, officer, or key employee or his/her immediate family, either directly or through corporations, trusts, or similar arrangements in which they hold a controlling interest.

Costs of services, facilities, and supplies furnished by organizations related to the provider agency must not exceed the competitive price of comparable services, facilities, or supplies purchased elsewhere.

Disclosure of Investment in Iran

Bidder: _____

Pursuant to Public Law 2012, c. 25, any person or entity that submits a bid or proposal or otherwise proposes to enter into or renew a contract must complete the certification below to attest, under penalty of perjury, that the person or entity, or one of the person or entity's parents, subsidiaries, or affiliates, is not identified on a list created and maintained by the New Jersey Department of the Treasury as a person or entity engaging in investment activities in Iran. If the Director finds a person or entity to be in violation of the principles which are the subject of this law, s/he shall take action as may be appropriate and provided by law, rule or contract, including but not limited to, imposing sanctions, seeking compliance, recovering damages, declaring the party in default and seeking debarment or suspension of the person or entity.

- I certify, pursuant to Public Law 2012, c. 25, that neither the bidder listed above nor any of the bidder's parents, subsidiaries, or affiliates is listed on the N.J. Department of the Treasury's list of entities determined to be engaged in prohibited activities in Iran pursuant to P.L. 2012, c. 25 ("Chapter 25 List"). I further certify that I am the person listed above, or I am an officer or representative of the entity listed above and am authorized to make this certification on its behalf. I will skip Part 2 and sign and complete the Certification below.

OR

- I am unable to certify as above because the bidder and/or one or more of its parents, subsidiaries, or affiliates is listed on the Department's Chapter 25 list. I will provide a detailed, accurate and precise description of the activities in Part 2 below and sign and complete the Certification below. Failure to provide such will result in the proposal being rendered as nonresponsive and appropriate penalties, fines and/or sanctions will be assessed as provided by law.

PART 2: PLEASE PROVIDE FURTHER INFORMATION RELATED TO INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES IN IRAN

Using attached sheets, provide a detailed, accurate and precise description of the activities of the bidding person/entity, or one of its parents, subsidiaries or affiliates, engaging in the investment activities in Iran outlined above.

Certification: I, being duly sworn upon my oath, hereby represent and state that the foregoing information and any attachments thereto to the best of my knowledge are true and complete. I attest that I am authorized to execute this certification on behalf of the above-referenced person or entity. I acknowledge that the State of New Jersey is relying on the information contained herein and thereby acknowledge that I am under a continuing obligation from the date of this certification through the completion of any contracts with the State to notify the State in writing of any changes to the answers of information contained herein. I acknowledge that I am aware that it is a criminal offense to make a false statement or misrepresentation in

this certification, and if I do so, I recognize that I am subject to criminal prosecution under the law and that it will also constitute a material breach of my agreement(s) with the State of New Jersey and that the State at its option may declare any contract(s) resulting from this certification void and unenforceable.

Full Name (print): _____

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Date Received

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Cover Sheet

Name of RFP _____

Incorporated Name of Applicant: _____

Type: Public _____ Profit _____ Non-Profit _____ Hospital-Based _____

Federal ID Number: _____ Charities Reg. Number (if applicable) _____

Address of Applicant:

Contact Person: _____ Phone No.: _____

Email address: _____

Total dollar amount requested: _____ Fiscal Year End: _____

Funding Period: From _____ to _____

Total number of unduplicated clients to be served: _____

Counties in which services are to be provided: _____

Brief description of services by program name and level of service to be provided*:

Authorization: Chief Executive Officer (printed name): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____