

Background on the Request for Proposal and Vendor Selection Process

The Department on Aging makes allocations for contractual services on the basis of several factors. These include: a) the anticipated funding available through the Department's federal and state grant programs; b) the needs of Milwaukee County's older adult population as identified in the Department's Area Plan; c) federal and state requirements regarding eligible populations to be served and services to be provided; and d) the need to maintain continuity of care and services to the many frail elders who depend upon the Department's programs and services for their continued independence in the community.

Allocations for most services do not change significantly from year to year. When additional funding is anticipated, the Department invests it in the following ways:

- Increasing allocations for individual programs serving high needs populations;
- Creating new programs for populations not previously served;
- Developing services to meet previously unmet needs of older people; and
- Increasing allocations to existing programs to help meet rising costs and maintain levels of service.

Over the years some program have been redesigned to provide services more efficiently or to use limited resources more effectively.

The Commission on Aging/Department on Aging recommended 23 contract awards to 16 service providers. Fourteen of the recommended awards were selected on the basis of an open and competitive Request for Proposals (RFP). This process was initiated in August with the publication of legal notices in three newspapers, including one serving the African-American community. Interested parties were able to obtain general RFP guidelines and requirements, specific program/service guidelines or specifications, and proposal forms at Departmental offices in the Marcia J. Coggs Human Services Center. The RFP materials clearly described the programs and services for which the Department was seeking providers, the amount of funding available in each program and service area, and the criteria to be used in evaluating proposals.

Proposals submitted by the published deadline of September 2, 2016, were evaluated by Department staff and based on established criteria. The criteria included: the ability of the provider to meet program/service guidelines and specifications; the budget and unit rates (if required) proposed by each provider; the need to maintain continuity of services to frail elders; and the ability and willingness of vendors to provide a living wage and family supporting benefits. Staff reviewed and summarized each proposal and submitted award recommendations in written proposal analyses.

Copies of proposals and proposal analyses were provided to members of the Commission on Aging's Service Delivery Committee, whom collectively provided nearly 100 hours of volunteer time reading RFP materials, proposals submitted, and staff analyses. Copies of the staff analyses were mailed to the vendors who submitted the relevant proposal. Vendors were provided an opportunity to comment on contract recommendations during committee meetings.

The enclosed table summarizes changes in the Department's contract award recommendations for 2017. The Department's practice is to explain changes greater than 5%. No significant changes are expected in 2017.