

**State of Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

RETURN TO:
DHHS - Procurement
301 Centennial Mall South, 5th Floor
Lincoln, NE 68508
Phone: (402) 471-6082
E-mail: dhhs.procurement@nebraska.gov

SOLICITATION NUMBER	RELEASE DATE
RFI In-home Services	August 23, 2018
OPENING DATE AND TIME	PROCUREMENT CONTACT
October 5, 2018 2:00 p.m. Central Time	Michelle Thompson

This form is part of the specification package and must be signed in ink and returned, along with information documents, by the opening date and time specified.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!

SCOPE OF SERVICE

The State of Nebraska (State), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) for the purpose of gathering information for In-home Child Welfare services.

Written questions are due no later than September 7, 2018, and should be submitted via e-mail to dhhs.procurement@nebraska.gov.

Bidder should submit one (1) original of the entire RFI response. RFI responses should be submitted by the RFI due date and time to dhhs.procurement@nebraska.gov.

RFI responses should be received in Department of Health and Human Services by the date and time of RFI opening indicated above.

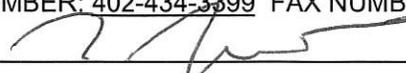
BIDDER MUST COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING

By signing this Request For Information form, the bidder guarantees compliance with the provisions stated in this Request for Information.

FIRM: Children and Family Coalition of Nebraska (CAFCON)

COMPLETE ADDRESS: 530 S. 13th Street Suite 110 Lincoln, NE 68508

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 402-434-3399 FAX NUMBER: 402-434-3390

SIGNATURE:  DATE: October 4, 2018

TYPED NAME & TITLE OF SIGNER: Nick Juliano, President, Children and Family Coalition of Nebraska (CAFCON)

nick.juliano@cafcon.family



RFI In-Home Services Response

October 5, 2018

Children and Family Coalition of Nebraska (CAFCON) is shaping policies and services for the betterment of youth and families in Nebraska. The twelve established leader organizations of CAFCON are the backbone of child welfare services in the state. Collectively they act as a unified voice for those who don't or can't speak for themselves. Our current members include:

Boys Town	Cedars
Child Saving Institute	Children's Square
Family Service	Heartland Family Service
KVC Nebraska	Lutheran Family Services
Nebraska Children's Home Society	NOVA Treatment Community
Omaha Home for Boys	Youth Emergency Services

CAFCON supports the efforts of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Division of Children and Family Services to create a new service approach for families which provides for the safety of children in a home-like setting. As evidence suggests and its membership has experienced, CAFCON considers a continuum of care at a systems level to be the best approach in accomplishing the provision of safety, permanency, and well-being of Nebraska children and families. As such, CAFCON offers the following four core principles as essential components of a high-quality continuum of in-home services for children and families in communities across Nebraska:

1. Family Driven

Best practice standards require formal services and informal supports to be developed and delivered with direct input from families about their goals, and, when possible, about which provider to work with. Providers and families should work together to determine the needs of the family and the specific intervention(s) to meet those needs.

Why is this important? Families are the experts regarding their own children and often have effective solutions which address the issues that brought them into the system and meet the requirements of court orders. When families are involved in building the supports and services they need, they are more likely to experience future success and self-sufficiency.



An example: Allowing the provider/case manager and the family to adjust the dosage of the intervention (i.e. frequency, intensity, and duration) based on a timely assessment ensures that families receive the right service at the right time and avoids over or under-serving families which leads to better outcomes and reduces the amount of time a child is placed outside their home.

2. Focus on Quality Outcomes

Services at all levels should be required to adopt standards and practices which demonstrate that the children and families it serves are safe and experience positive outcomes. Accountability for standards, practices, and reporting should be the same for any direct service provision whether by a private agency or the Division of Children and Family Services. Nebraska should stop using programs and services which cannot demonstrate desired positive outcomes both during and after care.

Why is this important? Children and families have a right to stay together safely and to become self-sufficient and productive community members. Robustly-funded and flexible services should be oriented around these outcomes. Marks of high quality services should focus on family preservation, self-sufficiency, and productivity.

An example: Align accountability measures (contract monitoring and post-service outcomes) with quality measures (utilizing quality standards and measuring fidelity to approved models) and financial investment in programs and networks that allow for service providers to produce high quality results.

3. Utilize a Broad Range of Evidence in Choosing Programs

In Addendum One to RFI In-Home Services, the state response to question number three about which evidence-based services have been identified by DHHS states “Any service models that are rated as well-supported by CEBC or ACF will be considered”¹. While this approach aligns well with the funding criteria for prevention programs found in the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), it may have two unintended consequences: 1) the creation of service “deserts” where “well-supported” programs do not exist; and, 2) eliminate access to effective models currently in use in Nebraska which haven’t yet completed rigorous evaluation. In addition to considering current in-home models and interventions, also consider a process for identifying and evaluating future

¹ Addendum One to RFI In-home Services dated September 20, 2018. Accessed at <http://das.nebraska.gov/materiel/purchasing/RFI%20In%20Home%20Services/RFI%20In%20Home%20Services.html> on September 20, 2018.

models as research evolves. It will be important to recognize that, while some models already have the most rigorous evidence of their effectiveness, emerging models shown to be effective at preventing entry into the child welfare system should be supported on their trajectory toward increasing the rigor of evaluation.

Why is this important? It is likely that the first iteration of implementation of evidence-based in-home practices will inform new approaches not currently implemented in the field. Furthermore, from a statewide system perspective, it is important to maximize the use of research and evidence to inform choices of models while not arbitrarily limiting access to effective services due to an overreliance on “gold standard” evidence-base practices which may be cost prohibitive, available only in certain geographies, and may have narrow criteria².

An example: In 2014 the Nebraska juvenile justice system began looking at ways to make evidence-based practice interventions available to children in the juvenile justice system³. Consider adapting this approach for the child welfare population to ensure the best available evidence is used to determine in-home services across the state while allowing for effective models with emerging but compelling evidence.

4. Utilize Innovative Funding Models

In order to ensure high quality services that drive long-lasting and positive outcomes, public and private funders increasingly require more sophisticated contracting and funding models. In addition, the desire to shift thinking from purchasing services to purchasing outcomes demands innovative funding approaches. Regardless of the specific funding methodology, providers need adequate funding, including support for implementation of evidence-based practices, along with the flexibility to provide the right service, at the right time, for the right duration, leading to the achievement of expected outcomes.

Why is this important? Fee-for-service funding models have proven unsustainable to meet the highly complex needs of the child welfare population. More innovative funding methodologies such as case rates, performance-based contracting, or value-based contracting allow services to be flexible and to adjust

² Lipsey, M.W., Howell, J.C., Kelly, M., Chapman, G., & Carver, D. (2010). *Improving effectiveness of juvenile justice programs: A new perspective on evidence-based practice*. Washington, DC.

³ Wiener, R.L., Hobbs, A., & Spohn R. 2014. *Evidence based practice in juvenile justice: Nebraska white paper*.



to the needs of children and families and while best aligning quality measures and outcomes with financial incentives.

An example: Recent experience in Nebraska (Safety & In-Home Services) effectively utilized a case rate methodology. Several states including Iowa have effectively used performance-based contracting for community-based child welfare services designed to keep children at home with families or relatives⁴.

⁴ <https://dhs.iowa.gov/fsrp-services/rates-and-payments>

Form A

Vendor Contact Sheet

Request for Information Number In-home Services

Form A should be completed and submitted with each response to this solicitation document. This is intended to provide the State with information on the vendor's name and address, and the specific persons who are responsible for preparation of the vendor's response.

Preparation of Response Contact Information	
Vendor Name:	Children and Family Coalition of Nebraska (CAFCON)
Vendor Address:	530 South 13 th Street Suite 110 Lincoln, NE 68508
Contact Person & Title:	Nick Juliano, President
E-mail Address:	Nick.Juliano@cafcon.family
Telephone Number (Office):	531-355-1907
Telephone Number (Cellular):	402-350-3971
Fax Number:	402-498-3378

Each vendor shall also designate a specific contact person who will be responsible for responding to the State if any clarifications of the vendor's response should become necessary. This will also be the person who the State contacts to set up a presentation/demonstration, if required.

Communication with the State Contact Information	
Vendor Name:	Children and Family Coalition of Nebraska (CAFCON)
Vendor Address:	530 South 13 th Street Suite 110 Lincoln, NE 68508
Contact Person & Title:	Mary Johnson, Executive Director
E-mail Address:	Johnson@muellerrobak.com
Telephone Number (Office):	402-434-3399
Telephone Number (Cellular):	402-450-8112
Fax Number:	402-434-3390