

NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services
2011 Specialized Supervision and Treatment of Offenders Request for Proposals
Questions & Answers

As stated in the Request for Proposals (RFP), and in the interest of fairness to all prospective applicants, DCJS is posting the following answers to substantive questions received through May 23rd, 2011 regarding the Specialized Supervision and Treatment of Offenders RFP.

Q: Can we assume that parolees and parole violators are eligible for services under this proposal? How about re-entry clients?

A: Services are to be provided as an alternative to incarceration and could include these populations. Re-entry clients must have been released within the previous twelve months after incarceration in order to participate.

Q: Do you know if the Specialized Supervision and Treatment of Offenders grant being offered would cover funding for a Sex Offender Specialized Program?

A. Yes, a program targeting felony offenders or individuals before the court on felony charges, including felony sex offenses, could be considered as long as the program meets the other requirements of this RFP in addition to best practices for working with sex offenders as outlined in the **NYS Probation Sex Offender Management Practitioner Guidance** (<http://www.opca.state.ny.us/standards.htm>).

Q. Are probationers convicted of felonies eligible to be served under this solicitation?

A. Probationers who have been convicted of a felony offense or who are before the court on a felony charge are eligible.

Q. If staff for this project have already completed Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS) training, would we be required to send two others to be trained? If we have one individual OWDS trained, would we be allowed to send only one other individual for training?

A. The requirement to train two staff members in the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) *Offender Workforce Development Specialists (OWDS)* curriculum is intended to ensure that included among the staff primarily responsible for operating the proposed program, as reflected in the expenditure budget submitted, will be staff with the necessary competencies to assist the program participants in obtaining employment when possible. A total of two program staff members should have the NIC Offender Workforce Development Specialists training. Program staff that have successfully completed the training would not need to repeat it, but your application should indicate if program staff that will operate the proposed program have already completed the training.

Q. Given that the program requires participation in the NIC's Offender Workforce Development Specialist Training offered by OPCA, are contractors expected to subsequently implement the "Ready, Set, Work" curriculum?

A. Implementation of the *Ready, Set, Work!* group curriculum is not required by the RFP. Although a group curriculum is both effective and efficient, such a curriculum may not be suitable for implementation with all program delivery models.

Q. Can a proposal for a residential model include fewer than 25 completions because of the higher cost of providing residential services?

A. It is expected that other available funding obtained by the program would be accessed to offset residence costs. DCJS/OPCA would still require a minimum of 25 successful completions.

Q. Is there a cost associated with attending the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS) Training offered by OPCA?

A. There is not a cost for the training. It is expected that the associated per diem and any hotel and travel costs for the fourteen day training would be included in the expenditure budget at current government rates, and also as part of the milestones/outcomes in the work plan objectives for the start-up year of a proposed program.

Q. Can funding be used to provide the evidence based program Contingency Management to participants?

A. Expenditures for providing Contingency Management treatment not eligible for other reimbursement could be included in the supporting expenditure based proposal budget in accordance with training and licensing requirements. However, reimbursement for the performance based contracts awarded under this RFP will be based only upon the completion of the contracted milestones/outcomes.

Q. Page 4 of the RFP states that the proposed program model must include an actuarial risk and needs assessment used to drive individualized case planning. Will you provide an illustrative list of acceptable assessments or criteria to inform selection of an appropriate assessment?

A. The instrument most widely utilized currently to assess criminogenic risks and needs in New York State is COMPAS. Additional assessment would be necessary to determine substance abuse or mental health treatment specifics and appropriateness for community supervision.

Q. If an applicant submits a separate Attachment C for the start-up year, are we also expected to submit a separate Attachment D reflecting the figures indicated in the separate Attachment C?

A. Yes. If the applicant is applying for the start-up year, they should enter the start-up year workplan under the GMS workplan tab. A prospective workplan for the next year (operational year) should be attached to GMS as a Word document.

Q. Page 4 states programs will be expected to provide services to individuals with serious mental illness and/or co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse. Will programs be expected to assess clients for mental illness and only enroll clients who have a diagnosis of serious mental illness or are considered MICA, or will programs have the ability to serve a wider range of individuals but demonstrate a capacity to serve individuals who are mentally ill?

A. The RFP does not exclude individuals without a mental health diagnosis from receiving services under a proposed program.

Q. Can we apply for these funds solely to provide mental health-related services to clients also enrolled in other ATI programs, included ones funded by New York State, as long as we are not proposing overlapping outcomes or duplication of services?

A. A proposed program can provide mental health related services only to clients also enrolled in other ATI programs. A program would need to access an actuarial risk/needs assessment, cognitive behavioral training, and employment services as indicated in the RFP. It is conceivable that these and other necessary services could be provided under other contracts. If this is the case, the details for additional services not included in the expenditure and performance budgets for a proposal should be included in the response to question number five of the RFP and as otherwise indicated.

Q. Is there a minimum requirement for the length of time clients would be expected to be engaged in the program?

A. There is not a minimum length of time for program services stated in the RFP. It is anticipated that a successful proposal would normally include participants' involvement in program services for a minimum period of 120 days; and a much longer involvement may be necessary to effect lasting behavioral change.

Q. Under what conditions will an applicant be required to submit the letter of support from a NYS OASAS regional office? Would a letter of support from the local Office of Community Services suffice? If we offer an OASAS-licensed Part 822 outpatient substance abuse treatment program, would a copy of our operating certificate for our 822 program satisfy the RFP requirement of submitting a letter of support from an OASAS regional field office?

A. A letter of support from the NYS Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse would be required if alcohol or substance abuse services are to be subcontracted or are otherwise included in the expenditure budget for the proposed project. If such a letter cannot be obtained prior to the June 7 application deadline, a copy of the request should be provided pending receipt. A copy of the operating license may be included if the applicant agency will be providing these services. A letter of support from a county agency could also be included for the application, but will not substitute for the OASAS letter of support that is required for programs providing substance abuse services.

Q. OPCA mentions potential program characteristics as including “involvement of peers in recovery from serious mental illness in the design and operation of the project.” (page 4) What kind of involvement is OPCA suggesting?

A. There are various important ways that peers could be included in a proposed program design to model and otherwise contribute to program success. Examples include: peers serving as designated program staff, peer navigators for accessing medical or other services, job readiness activities, participation in the design of program service delivery, recovery awareness training or a combination of these functions as well as other possibilities. Ideally, the peers involved with the program would be individuals who are in recovery from mental illness or a co-occurring substance abuse disorder who have also formerly successfully completed criminal justice supervision or enrollment in an alternative to incarceration program.

Q. Please clarify the difference between a “letter of collaboration” and a “collaborative agreement,” which are indicated as belonging in two separate attachment groups for proposal submissions. Is the difference between the two that the latter is countersigned, while the former is not?

A. Yes, both address the understanding among the collaborative parties regarding the services to be provided or otherwise supported under the proposed program. However, an agreement should be signed by both the applicant and the collaborating organization and provide greater specificity as to the roles and responsibilities of each party.