



Best Value RFB 26-011

SCOPE OF WORK

I. INTRODUCTION

Ellis County Behavioral Health Department is seeking licensed therapists to complete mental health assessments and outpatient therapy for Ellis County Veteran's Treatment Court (ECVTC) with the Veterans involved with this treatment court.

Purpose and Intent

The intent of this open-ended Best Value Request for Bid (RFB) is to establish a pre-qualified pool of licensed therapists to provide behavioral health assessments and outpatient therapy services. These services support the Ellis County Behavioral Health Department and the Ellis County Veteran's Treatment Court (ECVTC).

Pool Qualifications and Selection Process

Responders must meet all mandatory minimum qualification standards set by the County to be admitted into the provider pool. Admission to the pool qualifies vendors for subsequent evaluation under Best Value or Request for Bid (RFB) criteria.

Service Location Preference

While all qualified therapists are encouraged to respond, rendering services within Ellis County is highly preferred. Proximity and local service ability will be factored into the Best Value evaluation, and providers capable of offering local services may be prioritized or utilized over non-local providers to best meet the needs of the ECVTC.

Terms of Engagement

- Services will be utilized on an as-needed basis based upon the ECVTC and departmental needs.
- Admission to the provider pool or submission of a bid does not guarantee a contract of award, minimum volume of work, or any compensation.

Submission Instructions

Proposers are **strongly encouraged** to submit all response documents electronically through this IonWave portal. Electronic Submission ensures immediate confirmation of receipt and streamlines the evaluation process. If you need help with the online submission, please contact Senior Buyer, Taylor Windell, taylor.windell@elliscountytexas.gov.

In accordance with Texas Local Government Code, manual submissions are accepted if an electronic fallback is required. Manual responses must be delivered to the Ellis County Purchasing Department in a sealed envelope containing one (1) original hard copy and one (1) USB flash drive with all required proposal documents.

Deadlines and Latency: all submissions -whether electronic or manual-must be received prior to the strict closing date and time. Ionwave serves as the official clock for this solicitation. Late submissions will not be accepted under any circumstances.

II. QUALIFICATIONS TO BID

- Applicants shall have adequate financial resources, insurance, and legal authority to contract for and furnish the mental health assessments and therapy at issue. Applicants, and any employed staff, shall also have all appropriate and applicable facility, program, and individual licenses and credentials issued by the Texas Behavioral Executive Council (TxBHEC); and in addition, applicants and any employed staff shall be otherwise legally qualified to perform the mental health assessment prior to the submission of a proposal.
- Applicants shall have an unrestricted license in the State of Texas as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) or Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT), or be an associate under direct supervision of a LCSW-Supervisor, LPC-Supervisor, or LMFT-Supervisor.
- Applicants shall have at least one year of experience working with Veterans.
- Applicants that are military Veterans are preferred but not required.
- Applicants shall have at least 3 professional references.
- Applicant shall provide 3 letters of recommendation (do not include client/patient references).
- Applicants shall have NPI and capability of billing insurance, if applicable to the Veteran.
- The contracted provider must **bill available private insurance first** for all applicable services rendered to a Veteran. Ellis County will only consider private

pay rates when insurance is completely unavailable. (County will not remediate cost gaps between contract rates and insurance reimbursements.)

- Respondents applying to provide **Assessment services** in any capacity are required to upload a redacted sample assessment.
- Responding providers must be capable of completing a full written mental health assessment and delivering it to the Ellis County Behavioral Health Department within five (5) working days of the referral.

III. OVERVIEW

Applicants will ensure that only reasonable and allowable costs will be used in the cost justification. Applicants will present any value-added services available for reimbursement, to include ability to submit for reimbursement to insurance, Veteran's Affairs, or other available funding sources. Applicants will be responsible for insurance billing where available. The costs identified in this proposal shall be for private pay only. The county will not remediate costs between contract rate and insurance reimbursement.

If proposal is accepted and unallowable or unreasonable costs are expended during the contract period, the provider may be subject to contractual and criminal sanctions.

Ellis County Behavioral Health Department is requesting proposals for mental health assessment and mental health intervention services for Veteran offenders in Ellis County. Prices shall be firm for the entire contract period.

The proposal submitted in response to this RFP, if accepted, will become the Operations Plan and will become legally binding upon the provider as the process by which the proposed substance abuse treatment services are provided under any contract.

Applicants with multiple contracts with state or local governments or other agencies will develop accounting processes that allow for verification of rates. This may include indirect cost rates or cost pooling.

Applicants will submit monthly invoices for payment for services to the Ellis County Behavioral Health Department. Agencies will be required to comply with the procedures specified by the Ellis County Behavioral Health Department and accompany invoices with the date of service. The invoice will include the type and the date of service provided.

The applicant shall agree to provide appropriate testimony, affidavits, or documents for any court proceeding and/or trial related to its treatment and other services for Ellis County Behavioral Health Department and Ellis County Veterans Treatment Court, if required, at no additional cost to the Ellis County Behavioral Health Department.

Ellis County Behavioral Health Department will not be responsible for payment of services rendered to a Veteran without a referral from Ellis County Behavioral Health Department. The prices quoted in response to this RFP should be the full cost of assessments and therapeutic interventions.

Details will not be publicly disclosed until all ensuing negotiations have been completed, and contractual agreements have been carried out as allowed by law. The Ellis County Behavioral Health Department reserves the right to negotiate a written contract with the applicants who, in their opinion, offer the most advantages to Ellis County Behavioral Health Department utilizing the best evaluation factors. Subjective (criteria other than price) as well as objective criteria may be used to evaluate and select vendors for the purpose intended.

The Ellis County Behavioral Health Department reserves the right to accept the proposals presenting the best offer, or to reject any or all proposals. This offer may or may not be the lowest bid.

IV. BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT & INTERVENTION MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

The applicant shall, in accordance with the terms of this RFB shall provide all necessary personnel, equipment, materials, supplies, facilities, and services (except as may be furnished by the Ellis County Behavioral Health Department as specified in writing as part of this RFB) and do all things necessary for, or incidental to, the provision of the services listed in this RFB. All services will be provided face-to-face, unless otherwise approved by ECVTC, in Ellis County.

V. ASSESSMENTS

Selected applicants will complete a mental health assessment for one hundred (100) percent of individuals referred and provide a written individual assessment identifying mental health diagnoses and recommended level of care services to be completed and provided to Ellis County Behavioral Health Department within five (5) working days of assessment.

The written assessments, conducted by qualified therapists (as detailed in Qualifications to Bid), shall assess Veterans' overall biopsychosocial needs and cognitive functioning. Selected applicants shall use evidence-based evaluation and assessment tools.

Required/Preferred Assessments:

- Structured Clinical Interview for the DSM-5 (SCID-5), or comparable alternative.
- Beck Depression Inventory – II (BDI-II) (required)
- PCL-M (Required)
- Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale – Screener, or comparable suicide risk alternative.
- Rotter Locus of Control (optional, or comparable alternative).
- Mental Status Exam

Submitted assessments shall include clinical assessments and their interpretations, diagnostic impression, and include the following content areas:

- Military History
- Factors for risk of harm to self or others
- Mental Health
- Substance Use
- Housing
- Employment
- Medical
- Social/Relational
- Strengths
- Treatment recommendations

Assessments submitted to Ellis County Behavioral Health Department shall include the following:

- All assessments and responses to assessments.
- Diagnosis
- Clinical Justification for diagnosis. This should be a written statement by the provider synthesizing the data from the assessments, how that information was collected (patient and/or collaterals) and include the content areas previously identified in this RFP in the ASSESSMENTS section.
- Recommendation for least restrictive means intervention as appropriate.
- Selected applicants will complete mental health assessment for one hundred percent (100%) of Veterans referred.
- Selected applicants shall schedule assessments with Veteran within 5 working days of receipt of referral.

- Selected applicants shall submit completed assessment and collateral documentation to Ellis County Department of Behavioral Health within Five (5) working days of assessment appointment.
- Selected applicants shall provide group and/or individual mental health intervention as appropriate and indicated by the assessment.
- Selected applicants will notify Ellis County Department of Behavioral Health, in writing, of inability to complete assessment, including justification for inability to schedule (identify if there is a scheduling conflict on part of applicant(s) or Veteran, etc) within the same 5 working days upon receipt of the referral.
- Selected applicant will provide minimum of 30 days' notice of inability to execute terms of the contract.

VI. THERAPUTIC INTERVENTION

- Selected applicants will provide mental health group and individual therapy to the ECVTC participants, based on assessment and recommendation of the Ellis County Director of Behavioral Health.
- Selected applicants will have ability to provide evidence-based treatment modalities for veterans with Post Traumatic Stress, as well as other mental health disorders.
- Selected applicants will disclose any evidence-based practices in which they are certified or qualified, as well as areas in which they specialize.

VII. REQUIREMENTS

- Each Respondent must submit all required documentation listed in IonWave under the "Response Attachments" tab.
- Respondents applying to provide **Assessment services** in any capacity are required to upload a redacted sample assessment under the 'Response Attachments' tab. Failure to submit redacted assessment may attribute to delays in evaluation. Ellis County reserves the right to request this sample redacted assessment if not uploaded during submission. submitted shall include an example of de-identified assessment, following the guidelines provided above in the ASSESSMENTS section.

- Responding providers are highly preferred to utilize standard evidence-based assessment tools (e.g., SCID-5, BDI-II, PCL-M, etc.). If the applicant utilizes **comparable alternative** evidence-based assessment tools, the applicant shall provide context and information regarding the alternative options, including comparisons between assessment tools, to ensure those tools fit the needs of the ECVTC and Ellis County Department of Behavioral Health. Please upload this under 'Additional Attachments' tab when uploading required documents under the response attachments tab in IonWave.
- If applicant(s) does not utilize the evidence-based assessment tools identified in this RFP or a comparable alternative, applicant(s) shall indicate willingness to participate in training to use evidence-based assessment tools at the cost of the applicant(s).
- Proposer shall provide proof of insurance credentialing for any private insurance providers with which they are credentialed.
- Ellis County Behavioral Health Department and the Ellis County Veteran's Treatment Court (ECVTC) highly prefers providers capable of rendering services locally (In person and in Ellis County). While non-local providers are encouraged to respond, local presence and proximity of services will be factored into the Best Value evaluation criteria. Providers with an established physical or service footprint within Ellis County may be prioritized or utilized over others to ensure maximum accessibility for program participants.

VIII. Method of Award & Evaluation Criteria

This solicitation is being evaluated as a Best Value Request for Bid (RFB) to establish an open-ended provider pool. Awards will not be based on a subjective numerical point scale. Instead, evaluations will be conducted on a Pass/Fail basis using the following criteria:

1. Mandatory Qualifications (Pass/Fail): Responders must meet all licensing (TxBHEC), background, insurance, and NPI requirements outlined in the qualifications section.
2. Operational Capacity (Pass/Fail): Responders must confirm compliance with all timeline constraints (5-day assessment delivery) and therapeutic treatment requirements.

3. Price/Fee Schedule Evaluation: Responders must submit clear pricing via the IonWave line items tab. Rates must be comprehensive of all administrative, clinical, and reporting expenses.

Pool Activation: All responsible bidders who achieve a "Pass" on all mandatory qualification attributes and present a fair and reasonable fee schedule will be accepted into the multiple-award provider pool. Utilization from the pool will be managed on an as-needed basis by program coordinators based on participant fit, counselor specialization, and location preference.

Respondents' evaluation elements include, but are not limited to the following:

Quality of Diagnostic Impression and Recommendations – (Assessment Services Only)

- Accuracy and comprehensiveness of diagnostic assessments in alignment with DSM-V-TR criteria
- Use of evidence-based practices in developing treatment recommendations.
- Appropriate identification of co-occurring disorders.
- Clarity and organization of written reports and documentation.
- Cultural and trauma-informed approaches are reflected in assessment and recommendations.
- Recommends appropriate levels of care.

Quality of Treatment Interventions – (Therapy Services Only)

- Use of evidenced-based interventions appropriate for veterans.
- Provision of services in a specialized population.
- Appropriate interventions for levels of care.

Qualifications and Experience

- Applicant(s) qualifications: Experience/Licensure
- Evident of previous experience in providing mental health assessments in the past two (2) years.
- Experience working with Veterans for at least one (1) year.
- Applicant(s) that are Veterans are preferred, but not required.
- Include at least three (3) professional references and three (3) letters of recommendation.
- Completion of all aspects of this request for proposal.