

Olmsted County Health, Housing and Human Services (HHH)
Olmsted County Children's Mental Health Local Advisory Council
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

INTRODUCTION

The County of Olmsted, State of Minnesota ("County"), on behalf of the Health, Housing and Human Services Division is soliciting proposals for a Children's Mental Health Local Advisory Council (LAC). Proposals from interested agencies or collaboration of agencies are sought to develop, coordinate and facilitate an Olmsted County Children's LAC for a period of three years.

CURRENT SERVICES

Children's Mental Health is an area of high priority for our community. Mental health broadly has been prioritized as a top 3 priority in the Olmsted County Community Health Improvement Plan. According to the 2002 Minnesota Department of Education Student Survey, 23.9% of eight grade students, 25.4% of ninth grade students, and 31.8% of 11th grade students answered yes to "do you have any long-term mental health, behavioral, or emotional problems?" The Olmsted County Human Services Advisory Board focused on mental health in 2023, seeking to better understand the barriers and identify gaps to addressing youth mental health. They made several high-level recommendations, which included establishing a Children's Mental Health Local Advisory Council.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) reports that "In 2023, 10 states (Vermont, New Mexico, Minnesota, Iowa, Arizona, Montana, Oregon, New Hampshire, Maryland, and Pennsylvania) had the highest rates per 100,000 population (between 1,559 and 4,030) of children with trauma- and stressor-related disorder diagnoses receiving mental health and support services in the United States." ([SAMHSA Mental Health Client-Level Data](#))

Olmsted County would benefit from a formalized mechanism to hear from community members impacted by mental health challenges through a Children's LAC. According to the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), a LAC offers individuals, parents, families, and providers the opportunity to make a real difference in how mental health care is provided in their community. It offers county and state policy makers the wisdom of those who experience mental health concerns first-hand. There are many benefits to a LAC, including but not limited to:

- Empowering individuals with mental health lived experience(s) and their families;
- Active, productive and effective LACs can lead to improvement of the local mental health system and services for the community;
- Offering advice on the local mental health system on what is and is not working;
- Counties can utilize LACs to advise them on a range of mental health related topics, such as improving their local mental health and social services systems.

LACs are statutorily required by the State of Minnesota, though research indicates they are limited across the state. Olmsted County does not have a Children's LAC currently and through this RFP seeks to rectify that.

INNOVATIVE OPTIONS

Olmsted County is seeking an agency or collaborating agencies to meet all Children's LAC services sought. Innovative or "thinking outside the box" options are encouraged as is collaboration between agencies to create a response to this RFP which is tailored a Children's LAC needs.

SCOPE OF SERVICE

Annually, the Children's LAC shall:

- Arrange for input from the local system of care providers regarding coordination of care between the services;
- Identify for the county board the individuals, providers, agencies and associations as specified in section 245.4877, clause (2); and
- Provide to the county board a report of unmet mental health needs of children residing in the county to be included in the county's biennial children's mental health component of the community social services plan and participate in developing the mental health component of the plan.

The following individuals must serve on the local children's mental health advisory council, the children's mental health subcommittee of an existing local mental health advisory council, or be included on an existing mental health advisory council:

- At least one person who was in a mental health program as a child or adolescent,
- At least one parent of a child or adolescent with severe emotional disturbance,
- One children's mental health professional,
- Representatives of minority populations of significant size residing in the county,
- Representatives of the children's mental health local coordinating council,
- One family community support services program representative.

REQUIREMENTS

Olmsted County Child and Family Services is seeking a community-based solution for a Children's Mental Health Local Advisory Council. Solution proposals must include:

- Plan to detail the initial development of the Children's LAC.
- Plan to detail the ongoing coordination and facilitation of the Children's LAC for at least a two year period.
- Timeline of both the initial development and ongoing coordination and facilitation.
- Proposed budget
 - Budget must include compensation for the expertise of individuals with lived experience (\$50 per person per meeting).
 - Budget should differentiate between initial development and ongoing coordination and facilitation.
 - Budget cannot exceed \$20,000 annually.

QUESTIONS

Proposers may not contact Olmsted County staff directly. Any questions and inquiries must be submitted through IonWave at <https://olmstedcounty.ionwave.net> under the “Questions” tab by **the date listed in IonWave**. Responses to all questions and inquiries will be posted through IonWave no later than **the date noted under the “Activities” tab**. No questions and inquiries will be entertained after the follow-up question submission time ends.

Information considered valid for the purpose of submitting a proposal shall be only that information which is contained in this RFP, the attachments to this RFP, or answers issued to the questions submitted through IonWave. Proposals based upon information obtained from any other source, verbal or written, shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected.

The County reserves the right to modify the RFP at any time prior to the proposal due date. If the RFP is modified, addenda to the RFP will be made available to all Proposers through IonWave at <https://olmstedcounty.ionwave.net> under the “Addenda” tab. It is the responsibility of each prospective Proposer to assure receipt of all addenda posted via IonWave. The County will modify the RFP only by formal written addenda.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

All proposals shall be submitted prior to the proposal close date and time through the electronic site IonWave at <https://olmstedcounty.ionwave.net>. Proposals must be electronically received no later than **the close date and time listed in IonWave**.

Failure to submit a proposal on time may be grounds for rejection of the proposal. The County is not responsible for delays with a Proposer which results in submission of an untimely proposal. The IonWave server clock shall govern.

COMPONENTS OF THE PROPOSAL

Submitted proposals must include at least the following elements:

- Plan that details the initial development of the Children’s LAC.
- Plan that details the ongoing coordination and facilitation of the Children’s LAC.
- Timeline of both the initial development and ongoing coordination and facilitation.
- Proposed budget of both the initial development and ongoing coordination.

SELECTION OF PROPOSALS

Only proposals received by the deadline will be reviewed. A Proposal Evaluation Committee will review the proposals. As part of the review process, additional information or clarification may be requested of Proposers either by letter, phone or personal interview. Selected Proposers may be interviewed before a final decision is made.

PROPOSAL REVIEW

A Proposal Evaluation Committee will include at least one Program Manager from Olmsted County Youth Behavioral Health, at least one community member with lived experience, and at least three other Olmsted County staff will review proposals based on the following criteria:

- Meeting Children's LAC requirements outlined in the Scope of Services section. (35%)
- Incorporation of best practices and recommendations found within the [LAC Guidebook](#) prepared by the Minnesota Department of Human Services Behavioral Health Division. (30%)
- Timeline (20%)
- Budget (15%)

OWNERSHIP OF MATERIALS SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

All proposals submitted in response to this RFP become the property of Olmsted County and will not be returned. All proposal information will be held in confidence during the evaluation process and prior to the time a proposal has been formally accepted. Thereafter, proposals will become public information.

Under Minnesota law, proposals are private and nonpublic until the proposals are opened on the proposal due date. Once the proposals are opened, the name of the Proposer becomes public. All other data in the proposal is private or nonpublic data until completion of the evaluation process. The evaluation process is completed when the County enters a contract with a Proposer. At that time, all remaining data submitted by all Proposers is public apart from data exempted under Minn. Stat. Section 13.37 of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.

If the Proposer believes nonpublic data is included in its proposal, Proposer shall clearly identify the data and cite the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act exemption(s). All proposers must complete the Trade Secret Information Form and submit it along with their proposal. However, the Proposer agrees, as a condition of submitting a proposal, the County will not be liable or accountable for any loss or damage which may result from a breach of confidentiality, as may be related to the proposal. Pricing, fees, and costs are public data.

The Proposer agrees to indemnify and hold the County, its officials, agents, and employees harmless from all claims arising out of, resulting from, or in any manner attributable to any violation of any provision of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, including legal fees and disbursements paid or incurred to enforce this provision.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION NOTICES

- a. The County reserves the right to withdraw, cancel, suspend, and/or modify this RFP for any reason and at any time with no liability to any prospective Proposer for any costs or expenses incurred in connection with the RFP or otherwise.
- b. A proposal may be modified or withdrawn through IonWave prior to the proposal close date and time.
- c. Upon submission, proposals will not be returned.
- d. The County shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by Proposer in connection with this RFP. Proposer shall bear all costs associated with proposal preparation,

submission, and attendance at presentation interviews, or any other activity associated with this RFP or otherwise.

- e. The Proposer affirms that, to the best of its knowledge, its proposal does not present a conflict of interest with any party or entity, which may be affected by the terms of a contract resulting from this RFP. The Proposer agrees that, should any conflict or potential conflict of interest become known, it will immediately notify the County of the conflict or potential conflict, and will advise the County whether it will or will not resign from the other engagement or representation. Further, the County may make reasonable efforts to avoid, mitigate, or neutralize an organizational conflict of interest by a Proposer in all competitive procurements. To avoid an organizational conflict of interest by a Proposer, the County may utilize methods including disqualifying a Proposer from eligibility for a contract award or canceling the contract if the conflict is discovered after a contract has been issued. To mitigate or neutralize an organizational conflict of interest by a Proposer, the County may use methods such as revising the scope of work to be conducted, allowing Proposers to propose the exclusion of task areas that create a conflict, or providing information to all Proposers to assure that all facts are known to all Proposers. The County may, at its sole and absolute discretion, waive any conflict of interest.
- f. Olmsted County reserves the right to negotiate terms contemporaneously and/or subsequently with any number of Proposers as Olmsted County deems to be in its best interest.

CONTRACT DEVELOPMENT

An Olmsted County contract will reflect the County's policy to have contracts written on 1-year terms to coincide with County funding allocation schedules with the expectation that the selected Proposer(s) will provide contracted Children's LAC services on an initial basis for three years beginning January 1, 2027. Contract negotiations will proceed following selection of the apparent successful proposal. The content of this Request for Proposal and the selected proposal will become integral parts of the contract but may be modified by provisions of the contract. If a contract, for any reason, cannot be negotiated, another Proposer's response may be selected. The final contract shall be implemented upon approval from the Director of Health, Housing and Human Services and the Olmsted County Assistant Attorney. No County-funded services shall commence until the contract has been signed and approved by all parties and copies of applicable licenses and/or insurance certificates are received by Olmsted County.