

OCA / ADRCIP RFP #005
Community Dispute Resolution Centers Program
Questions Received and Answered

1. We are an existing provider. If we intend to apply for a county we're not currently serving, should we answer the county-specific questions as an existing provider or a non-existing provider? How should we answer the organizational-level questions?

A. Answer the county-specific questions for counties currently served as an existing provider, and the questions for counties not currently served as a non-existing provider. For organizational questions, answer as an existing provider.

2. Is Exhibit IX transposed? Is it Exhibit XI?

A. Yes, the Exhibit XI was originally mislabeled as Exhibit IX. This has been corrected on the website.

3. Are there instructions for Appendix C?

A. There are no instructions for Appendix C. The file will automatically calculate a budget based on entries to the Appendix C Excel file.

4. Should organization questions be filled out in its own section or in the body of the RFP (p.11 of the main section as well?)

A. The organizational questions only need to be submitted once per proposal, regardless of the number of counties the proposer applies for. The Word documents available at <http://nycourts.gov/admin/bids/currentsolicitations.shtml> can be used to prepare that portion of the proposal, or a proposer may re-type the questions and respond to them as part of a larger document. The Word documents are provided as a courtesy and are not required for use.

5. For existing programs: should we resubmit budget figures for 2013 for program budget? or do you want an agency budget including program, as implied in your directions under "organizational questions?"

6. Should the budget for the 12-month period for 2013-14 reflect a Center's total projected budget or should it reflect the Center's ADR budget only?

A. The budget submitted for the RFP should reflect the program proposed, including any matching funds. Whether or not that budget shows the full agency/organization budget or duplicates a current year budget is at the discretion of the proposer.

7. Do we submit a cover page for each county (Appendix B)

A. Only one copy of the cover page needs to be submitted per proposal, including multi-county proposals.

8. Pages 5-10 of Attachment I are not relevant – how are these pages to be handled?

A. Only the cover sheet and pages 3 and 4 of Attachment I need to be submitted.

9. Questions #23 on p. 18 references questions #18-21. Should that be "19-21?"

A. Yes - questions 19 - 21 are relevant for question #23. This has been corrected in an updated file on the website.

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10. *Questions #25 on p. 19 asks for a response for year 2007-08. Is this a typo? Should it read 2011-12 as in the chart?*

A. Yes, the question text should read "In the chart on the next page, report the number of cases for which the center provided services in fiscal year 2011-12..." This has been corrected in updated files on the website.

11. *This RFP appears to be about CDRC funding....is there another for children's centers in the courts? It is an idea that has been on our 'wish list' for years! Thanks for any info you can send.*

A. The current RFP opportunity is for Community Dispute Resolution Centers, not Children's Centers. The Children's Centers in the Courts program is administered by our office. The current contracts for that program are scheduled to expire in 2015, so an RFP opportunity for that program will likely be available prior to that date.

12. *Do you know if local PEAPrograms (or Parents Apart) would be eligible programming under the CDRC RFP? From the beginning we have been collaborators to develop and maintain this programming.*

A. All not for profits are eligible to respond to the Community Dispute Resolution Centers RFP. Please note that we are seeking proposals for the operation of Community Dispute Resolution Centers outside of New York City.

13. *Is there any other funding you know about for PEAPrograms? We are highly dependent on grants/donations to sustain the workshops.*

A. We are not currently aware of funding available from the Unified Court System specific to Parent Education and Awareness Programs.

14. *Where is Exhibit F?*

A. There is no Exhibit F. Appendix F is a document created by the proposer and is to include the organization's strategic plan, resource development plan and mission statement. If the organization does not have one of these documents in place, the proposer is to attach a statement to that effect.

15. *If a Center is currently contracted to administer multiple counties, will that Center receive a match free grant based on \$40,000 per county served; even if, one or more counties' proposed allocation is less than \$40,000?*

A. Using Exhibit VI, prepare the budget for the proposed program using the required match amounts for each county.

16. *If a board member played a significant role in acquiring funds from businesses and/or other public sources to support a Center, can that amount count toward board support?*

A. While board support for fund development is a positive attribute, only direct donations from the board member may be counted in answering Organizational Questions 3(d) total

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amount of financial support given by the board in fiscal year 2011-2012 and 3(e) percentage of board members contributing financial support to the agency.

17. For Organizational Questions #1 "Explain how the proposed center is in alignment with the organization's mission, as attached in Appendix F, and, if relevant the organization's history," How is relevancy determined to decide if the history should be part of the explanation or not?

A. Whether or not to discuss the organization's history in the context of alignment with the proposed program is at the discretion of the proposer.

18. What procedures were used to determine each county's proposed allocation?

A. Proposed county allocations were developed using internal criteria that included, among other considerations, county demographic information, historical caseloads and consideration of potential caseloads in the context of available funding.

19. Is there a grant through the UCS for a police mediation program? I was hoping that you might be able to tell me if there is a grant.

A. The current RFP opportunity is for the Community Dispute Resolution Centers Program outside of New York City. While police mediation could be included in a proposal for the available funding, the RFP opportunity is not specifically for police mediation, and we are not aware of any funding opportunities from UCS specifically for that purpose.

20. Can Judicial District Administrative Office employees serve as references?

A. If a Judicial District Administrative Office employee intends to serve on an RFP review committee, it would to be a potential conflict of interest to have anyone employed by that office serve as a reference for any proposer. If a Judicial District Administrative Office chose not to serve on the RFP review committee, employees of that office would be free to act as references.

21. I understand that the pre-bid conference will be by phone. I do not have a link to register for that meeting. Could you send it to me?

A. The information is on page 4 of the RFP:

Pre-Bid Conference

A Pre-Bid Conference will be held on JULY 12, 2012 from 10:00AM-11:30AM with both an in person and telephone conference/internet option. If you intend to participate, you must email Amelia Hershberger at ahershbe@courts.state.ny.us prior to JULY 11, 2012.

Bidders can attend the conference in person at:

Office of Court Administration, 98 Niver Street, Cohoes, New York 12047

Or

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attend via conference call and internet through “Meeting Place.” To attend, call 1-888-795-5787 (US Toll-free) and enter meeting ID 3057 and sign online to

<https://mp.nycourts.gov/a/056d10037b5c9b48252ce2ded9ca5777>

Immediately prior to participating in the conference online, you MUST email Amelia Hershberger at ahershbe@courts.state.ny.us and indicate the names, titles, and affiliations of all attendees at your location.

While participation in either the in-person or internet bidders’ conference is not mandatory, it is strongly recommended.

22. *For number 21 of the County Specific Questions, are Existing Providers to list the “total number of cases and percentages of cases in which volunteers provided dispute resolution services” for the stated calendar year, or the fiscal year?*

A. County specific question #21 reads, in part, "For each of the last three calendar years, provide the total number of cases and percentage of cases in which volunteers provided dispute resolution services..."

23. *Where/how can we obtain a copy of the 2010-2011 Annual Report?*

A. The 2010-2011 Annual Report is available on our website at: <http://nycourts.gov/ip/adr/Publications.shtml>

24. *What address should we send or deliver our proposal to?*

A. Proposals should be clearly marked as “SEALED PROPOSAL - DELIVER IMMEDIATELY - DO NOT OPEN. RFP OCA/ADRCIP #005 DUE DATE AUGUST 9, 2012, 2:00 PM” and mailed or delivered to:

**Amelia Hershberger
Senior Court Analyst
Office of Alternative Dispute Resolution and Court Improvement Programs
98 Niver Street, Cohoes, NY 12047**

25. *Question 10 states “Please reference rather than attach any written materials.” Do you want entire sections of policy manuals quoted that support our answer or just a reference to the manual itself?*

A. It is at the discretion of the proposer whether to quote materials or reference them to best answer the questions posed in the RFP, but proposers should weigh whether a lengthy quote will create an answer well over the suggested limit and whether the question can be answered effectively with a shorter reference.

26. *Question 15 on staffing: Do you want resumes for non-ADR staff (e.g. CASA staff)?*

A. Resumes should be included for staff who are listed in the budget as part of the proposed program.

27. *May we attach letters of support in addition to the references?*

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A. Please do not attach materials that have not been requested. Letters of support will not be considered as part of the proposal.

28. How are we to complete the first question on Attachment IV, asking for the PO/Contract Number?

A. This field may be left blank or a proposer may write “To be determined” or “TBD” in the field.

29. On Attachment IV, what should we write in the Contract Procurement Number space? Is it the Bid/Proposal number which is OCA/ADRCIP RFP 005?

A. Yes. Write the RFP number of OCA/ADRCIP RFP #005 here, or leave the field blank.

30. As part of a larger organization, our strategic plan, etc., may not be program-relevant to the CDRC Program – should it be included in Appendix F nonetheless?

A. Yes.

31. If a question appears beneath one that indicates for existing providers / prospective providers, does that mean it is also only for existing / prospective providers?

A. Questions that do not specifically say that they are to be answered based on whether the proposer is an existing or prospective provider should be answered by all proposers regardless of whether the organization is an existing or prospective provider. Only those questions marked as such should be answered depending on whether the proposer is a current or prospective provider.

32. When will bids be opened?

A. Proposals are due at 2pm on August 9th and will be opened at exactly 2pm. Any proposals received after that time may be disqualified for lateness and will be opened at the discretion of UCS.

33. When will award decisions be made?

A. We are hopeful that decisions will be final by mid-September. All proposers will be notified by mail of all intended awardees and counties shortly thereafter.

34. Is the budget a 12 month budget or for the full contract term?

A. The budget submitted with the proposal must be for 12 months and cover the period April 1, 2013-March 31, 2014.

35. Should the budget be for each county / all counties?

A. Each proposal must contain one budget. The proposal must include a budget that encompasses all of the counties applied for in that proposal.

36. If a current provider, since having had their current budget for the fiscal year approved, received new funding to support the program that was not previously included on the budget, should that provider include that funding in their budget for the RFP?

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A. The budget that is submitted with the proposal can be anything you want as long as it is realistic and based in fact, and how that budget is structured is at the discretion of the proposer within the constraints set forth in Exhibit VI. The proposal budget will be considered in a vacuum – it will not be compared with current agency budgets.

37. Can a program show more revenue than was originally reported on reconciliation reports (for existing providers)?

A. Yes. In fact, Question 4 reads “Please include total financial support, even if it exceeds the minimum match requirements and/or has not been listed in past reconciliations or budgets,” so revenue received in excess of that previously reported can and should be included in the answer.

38. To further clarify, if we show a piece of our program budget in our reconciliation reports to UCS, we should instead show our full budget in the RFP?

A. In the response to Question 4, yes. In Appendix C, this is at the proposer’s discretion.

39. Should Question 4 be answered with fiscal or calendar numbers?

A. State fiscal year, and we will update the RFP documents to clarify this. State fiscal years are titled with the calendar in which the majority of the year occurred, so fiscal year 2007-2008 would be titled 2007 and so on.

40. In Question 4, is the question to be answered for fiscal years 2007 through 2011?

A. Yes.

41. In Question 21, should the answers be in calendar year data?

A. Yes. It is important to note, regarding data, that ordinary technical assistance that could be requested regardless of the RFP is appropriate, and current providers may request data extraction assistance from UCS staff.

42. In past RFPs, proposers were required to submit a Summary Checklist showing all of the documents to be submitted. Where is it?

A. It’s not there. No summary checklist is required for this RFP.

43. Where is Exhibit X?

A. Exhibit X is a link to the U.S. Census Bureau’s data for counties in New York, and it is an informational web link. It is not to be submitted with a proposal. Exhibit IX is also informational and web-only.

44. You’ve said that no letters of reference are to be accepted. Is there a signed agreement from judges that would be needed for them to act as a reference?

A. References should be submitted as requested in the RFP - list the name and contact information for all references. If a reference wishes to simply sign next to their name, they MAY do so, but that will not influence how we judge the reference. In other words, it

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would be acceptable to do this if the reference wanted to do so, but it is neither necessary nor preferred.

45. Who will be reviewing the proposals?

A. The review committees will be composed of Unified Court System employees, including CDRC program liaison staff. Amelia Hershberger, as the contact person for the RFP, will not serve on review committees. Invitations to serve on the committees will be extended to other UCS employees. Traditionally, ADRCIP has invited people from Judicial District Administrative Offices to serve on these committees, but participation by Judicial District Administrative Offices employees is not mandatory.

46. When will review committees be set?

A. Invitations will be made to non-ADRCIP review committee members by close of business Friday 7/13. Those invitations may not be immediately received due to vacation, but they will have been sent.

47. How can a proposer make sure that a reference isn't serving on a review committee?

A. Check with any UCS employee to ensure that they are not serving on a review committee and that no one in their immediate office is serving on a review committee. ADRCIP will also notify potential committee members that they may EITHER serve as references OR serve on the review committee.

To be on the safe side, make sure to ask potential references if they or others in their office intend to serve on review committees. ADRCIP intends to invite employees of the Judicial District Administrative Offices to serve on committees. While it is possible that trial court employees could serve on review committees, it is less likely.

48. When will updated documents be posted to the website?

A. Updates were made on 6/21, 7/12 and 7/25.

49. How can we tell which version of a web document is most recent or that a document has been updated?

A. The updated document will always note the date of update, while documents that have not been updated will not have a date. Please note that prior versions of the documents will remain on the website be sure to select the most recently updated version of any document downloaded.

50. How does one submit a multi county proposal? What if our answers are the same for some of the county-specific questions?

A. Organizational questions must be answered once per proposal. County specific questions must be answered once for each county, even if the answer submitted is the same across two or more counties. The budget should be submitted for all of the counties in a proposal.

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51. *In the Evaluation Tool, the organizational question A1 appears to have the same criteria in all of the point ranges. How will this question be scored?*

A. The criteria are above the bullets and points are to be awarded depending on how many of the bulleted criteria are met. Please note that the Evaluation Tool is the only way proposals will be evaluated.

52. *Can changes to the RFP documents be made up until the due date?*

A. Yes.

53. *Can questions change?*

A. Yes.

54. *Do you anticipate adding or substantively revising questions?*

A. We can say very strongly that no questions will be added, and that no substantive changes will be made to existing questions.

55. *Do you anticipate that changes will be primarily to clarify existing materials or correct typos?*

A. Heretofore, all changes to RFP documents have been clarifications and corrections and we do not anticipate that any other types of changes will be made.

56. *If a proposal is submitted prior to the deadline and changes are made to the RFP documents after submission, must the proposer resubmit the entire proposal or can it submit an addendum?*

A. Yes. The RFP document is being revised to note that addenda may be submitted prior to the due date. Addenda must be received by the RFP due date of August 9, 2012 at 2pm.

57. *To confirm, what is the amount of the UCS budgeted funding to be inserted into tab 1 of the budget. Is it the amount we are currently getting? Can we assume any cost of living increase?*

A. The amount of funding for each county and required minimum budget are listed in Exhibit VI, 12 Month Estimated Grant Awards and Total Required Budgets.

58. *On page 11, Organizational Questions Category 4 asks about public and private revenue that supports complementary non-dispute resolution programs. Are you referring to other programs in our agency or more related to the mediation centers, such as if we ran a supervised visitation program? I ask because our agency has four program areas.*

A. Non-dispute resolution complementary programs are those that complement Community Dispute Resolution Centers Programming but are not for the provision of dispute resolution services, more along the lines of human service provision such as supervised visitation or CASA than provision of healthcare, for example.

59. *Does Question 5 on page 12 refer to existing or prospective providers?*

A. Question 5, like all questions that do not specifically say that they should be answered by a prospective or existing provider, is a question for all proposers.

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60. *Is Appendix C related to the whole Mediation Center budget?*

A. Appendix C is the program budget for the proposed program and must include all counties applied for.

61. *Question 15 refers to Mediation Centers staff or all of our agency. It seems like a mix and I want to be sure I understand what you want.*

A. This question asks for a staffing plan for the program. Résumés and job descriptions are to be included for staff who are listed in the budget as part of the proposed program.

62. *Page 20 of the RFP has a chart. The chart requests information for fiscal years 2011-12, than jumps to 2013-2014. Is it intended to skip FY 2012-2013?*

A. Yes - it is deliberate since data would be partial for 2012-13.

63. *The budget we're to create is only for the ADR program, right? Not the whole agency budget with CASA and other programs?*

A. The RFP is asking for proposal for a CDRC Program, but how the proposer structures that budget in Appendix C, including whether or not to include non-dispute resolution programming, is at the proposer's discretion.

64. *I noticed on the grant that each question requests a number of characters rather than words. However, when I inquire on my computer it has two responses for that query; one with spaces and one without. Which is the operative number?*

A. The suggested number of characters per response includes spaces.

65. *We currently operate a program that includes a paid roster of non-staff. How should these people be characterized in question 21? Should we include two sets of numbers, or note the number of cases by staff/volunteers who are on the roster?*

A. Please submit one set of county-specific answers per county proposed, regardless of various models in place. Paid roster members who are not employees of the proposing organization may be considered volunteers. You may note the number of roster-mediated cases next to the response if you like, but this is not required.

66. *How do the changes to Appendix C impact my proposal? Is it okay to submit the older version of Appendix C that includes tab C-1?*

A. Please note that the Appendix C has been revised, and proposers are no longer being asked to submit a county-by-county breakdown of the full proposal budget. Do not submit Appendix C-1. You can simply not print that tab, or not include the printed page with your submitted proposal.

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67. Is it necessary to put the OCA/ADRCIP RFP #005 heading at the top of the pages of the narrative?

A. It is not necessary to put that heading in, but you are welcome to do so if you'd like to.

68. Must we submit a separate budget narrative for the proposed contract budget beyond what is provided in the Appendix C workbook where we are filling in each break out area of the proposal?

A. No, the only narrative component required for the budget is that included in the Appendix C file.

69. Can things be printed on both sides of the page or does it all have to be one sided? Can we three hole punch the copies and just bind them with a clip or band?

A. The specifications are silent on single/double sided and three hole punched copies, so whatever your preference is on those issues is fine.

70. Question #26 – Is the expectation that the numbers for referral sources equal 100%?

A. Yes.

71. Are job descriptions required for all? Appendix D requires job descriptions, however, question #15 for existing providers only requests resumes. Question #15 for prospective providers requires job descriptions.

A. Appendix D requires “Staff job descriptions and resumes” so both are to be included.

72. Regarding the references, do we need 3 for the whole program or 3 per county?

A. No. The proposal as a whole requires 3 references.

73. The RFP states that each proposer must submit a photocopy of correspondence issued by the IRS that indicates the proposer’s status as a tax-exempt organization 501(c)(3). Is our original letter from the IRS enough, or do we have to have something stating that as of this summer we are still 501(c)(3)?

The last time we submitted a proposal for these services, we included a letter from the NYS AG’s office showing that we were registered with the Charities Bureau and we were current with filings. Is that something that I should include this time?

A. Only the letter from the IRS is required, not a statement from the NYS AG, and the original letter issued to the agency is sufficient - a new one isn't necessary.

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74. Are the number of characters listed for questions an indication of what it would take to answer the questions appropriately or simply a guideline or indicator that it should not take us any longer to answer the question?

A. The suggested character counts are recommendations. It is up to the proposer whether to adhere to them or not, but they were developed based on our expectation of how long or short answers would need to be.

75. Does Question 12, regarding internal controls procedures, refer only to the fiscal management of the agency?

A. The footnote to this question includes the following definition: "Internal controls procedures are systematic methods such as reviews, checks and balances instituted by an organization to conduct its business in an orderly and efficient manner; safeguard its assets and resources; deter and detect errors, fraud and theft; ensure accuracy and completeness of accounting data; produce reliable and timely financial and management information; and ensure adherence to agency policies and plans."

76. In Question 18 the question says to use the grid to describe the organization's technological infrastructure. We are supposed to complete this for each county, but if the organization has an infrastructure that is more complex than just equipment in each office running independently, should we provide further information outside the grid to fully explain?

A. Please include only the equipment residing in the county in the grid response. In other county-specific (17 and 24) and organizational (7 and 8), the proposer may include information about availability of regional/main office equipment to the county.

77. Appendix D requests a copy of the organizations Certificate of Incorporation. If you had a name change do you want the original certificate plus the certificate of amendment or just the certificate of amendment which indicates the on the amendment stating certificate of incorporation of the original name of the corporation followed by the information of the approval of the new name.

A. Please include both the original certificate and the amendment.

78. What is the cover page requested in Attachment I? Is this document available in a format that you can type in your answers? Also are we completing this with an acknowledgement of individual and corporation or just individual or just corporation?

A. Page 1 of Attachment I is the cover sheet. There is not a fillable form available. The acknowledgment should be from the proposing entity.

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79. Exhibit VI requires that we spend at least the total minimum budget IN that county directly, correct?

A. In reading Exhibit VI, please note that minimum budget for each county includes all match – which may include that which was received in one county and expended in another – and may include administrative costs borne by the proposing agency as well as in-kind expenses such as donated space or volunteer hours.

The dollars need not be physically spent in the county to be applied to the program cost of operating the program as a whole. For example, a program director who oversees several counties could have his or her salary or travel to non-home counties shared among those counties. It is at the discretion of the proposer how those costs are allocated amongst counties. The proposal requires a multi-county budget, not individual budgets for each county proposal.