

EXHIBIT A
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)
READY BY 21 JOBS PROJECT FOR DJS CORPS YOUTH
FISCAL YEAR 2012

The Family League of Baltimore City, Inc. (FLBC) is issuing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for entities to provide job readiness and skills training consistent with the Ready by 21 (RB21) model from November 2011 – September 2012 for court-involved Baltimore City youth upon their return to the community following court-ordered residential placement or long-term detention. Funding for this project, a component of the *Continuum of Opportunity Re-entry Program & Services (CORPS) Initiative*, has been provided by the United States Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration to the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services under Agreement Number YF-18882-09-60-A-24.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DEADLINE

October 19, 2011, 5:00 pm

PURPOSE OF THE INVESTMENT

The Ready by 21 Jobs Project (RB21) utilizes structured and coordinated job preparedness practices to ensure that court-involved youth develop the knowledge and skills to succeed in the world of work. The foundation of the project is the belief that, when young people have opportunities to engage in positive activities, they are less likely to fall prey to the more familiar, negative activities of their neighborhoods.

RB21 provides 1) job readiness and skills training offering a pathway to year-round jobs; 2) intervention services to link youth with strong community institutions, caring adults and supportive peers; and 3) referrals to employment opportunities that complement their natural interests. National research has revealed a 75% success rate for participants as indicated by connections to positive institutions and no new infractions/convictions. The project was piloted in 2011 with ten community partners providing employment-related services to 362 City youth eligible for TANF resources and who were under the care of the Maryland Departments of Human Resources (DHR), Juvenile Services (DJS) or both. RB21 programming resulted in unsubsidized employment in the private sector for 19 youth; demonstrated growth in all workforce skills by 151 youth, as evidenced by a verified resume; and employment of 146 youth through YouthWorks. These results warrant continued growth of RB21 as a premier strategy to engage court-involved youth.

With this investment, The Family League seeks to provide job readiness and skills training consistent with the RB21 model from November 2011 – September 2012 for court-involved Baltimore City youth. The training must result in industry-recognized, transferrable credentials/skills (e.g., GNA, IT certifications, asbestos removal certification) consistent with the Greater Baltimore area's targeted growth industries of Healthcare & Social Assistance; Bioscience; Business Service; Computer, Internet & Software related data services; Hospitality, Tourism and Culinary Arts; Port & Port-related Services; or Sustainable Energy & Environmentally-driven Services. Awardees will be held to high standards and subject to unscheduled observations by the FLBC RB21 Coordinator.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must have a demonstrated track record of providing high quality employment/training programs for youth currently involved with the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services and who are returning to the community following court-ordered residential placement or long-term detention. Preference will be given to applicants (1) who have at least two years of experience providing employment/training services for the targeted youth population and (2) who, through participant-level outcome data, demonstrate success in facilitating the attainment of industry-recognized certifications/skills and unsubsidized employment within the private sector.

Applicants must qualify as one of the following:

- A not for profit corporation with 501c(3) status;
- A for profit corporation; or
- A public entity.

ESTIMATED COSTS AND TIMELINE

FLBC anticipates awarding \$440,000 to applicants proposing comprehensive employment development services for fifty (50) youth involved in the CORPS programs. Each applicant organization should identify the number of youth to be served by the proposed program. Proposals should clearly identify the program elements to be funded at an average per-student cost of \$9,000.

Applicants must present a detailed account of all fees and costs associated with the scope of work. At a minimum, please address:

- Funding allocated to youth wages and applicable taxes
- Fees associated with attaining certification and/or credentialing
- Cost per youth

SCOPE OF SERVICES/TASKS

Funding will be awarded to organizations that demonstrate their ability to provide cost-effective, high quality job training and employment opportunities for court-involved Baltimore City youth upon their return to the community following court-ordered residential placement or long-term detention. The following scope of services and tasks will be required. Please use these prerequisites as guides in preparing your submission.

Program requirements

- Provide pre-employment job readiness training to all youth referred by DJS. The training will ensure that program completers have developed workplace-appropriate attitudes, behaviors, and “soft skills” to be successful on the job. The training also must include employment applications, interview techniques, on-line applications, and resume development.
- Provide technical skills training and experience that will enable DJS youth to achieve industry-recognized, transferrable credentials. The program must be a combination of hands-on training and classroom instruction. It also must offer an on-the-job training experience or internship with a local employer or a vendor owned/sponsored enterprise. Skill areas must be consistent with projected growth industries for the region: Healthcare & Social Assistance; Bioscience; Business Services; Computer, Internet & Software related data services; Hospitality, Tourism and Culinary Arts; Port & Port-related Services; or Sustainable Energy & Environmentally-driven Services.

- Accept all youth, ages 14.5-21 years of age, as referred by the DJS Youth Advocate Agencies. Prior to release from court-ordered residential placement or long-term detention, each young person will work with a Career Transition Specialist from the Community College of Baltimore County to complete academic assessment and career interest testing, and to develop a Personalized Education and Employment Plan (PEEP) that will guide placement into a program consistent with his/her interests and abilities. The Youth Advocates also will ensure timely coordination of wrap-around services with other providers, e.g., MOED, Career Centers, mentors.
- Provide daily instruction and oversight, ranging from 12 - 24 hours/week per trainee. Individualized instruction and flexible scheduling will be required to accommodate school, counseling, mentoring, and other DJS-required activities. The time intensity of the weekly schedule may fluctuate depending upon the nature of the instruction/ job activities.
- Provide youth stipends and wages (inclusive of applicable taxes) commensurate with the scope of work.
- Employ instructors with related industry credentials and work experience, and support professionals who have prior experience working with court-involved youth.

Admissions and administrative requirements

- Accept all clients referred by the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services DJS. Youth from the same population already enrolled in the program cannot be counted toward the total number served, nor can eligibility be limited by provider-designated enrollment criteria.
- To ensure all youth have immediate access to training services following outplacement and/or detention, accept participants on a rolling admissions basis, beginning no later than November 15, 2011.
- Submit timely & accurate reports on program operations and youth wages with supporting documentation as required.
- Have the capacity to capture and report performance outcomes as required in the contract. Organizations receiving awards will be provided more detail on specific data collection responsibilities.

Performance measures and outcomes required

- 90% of youth retained to program completion
- 85% average daily attendance maintained
- 75% of program completers achieve an industry-specific credential or gain meaningful work experience.
- 75% of program completers develop assets, attitudes and resources they need to succeed in the work place.
- 75% of eligible youth transition to unsubsidized employment with local employers

RFQ SUBMISSION FORMAT

Submissions must include:

A. Proposal Abstract: Provide an abstract of your proposal in the following format:

Exhibit A

RFQ - RB21 Jobs DJS CORPS Youth

Applicant organization:

Applicant address:

Primary contact:

Position/title:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Industry sector(s) targeted:

Industry-recognized, transferrable credentials/skills to be earned:

Industry partners:

Number of youth to be served:

B. Qualifications/Experience: Provide a concise profile of prior or current experience, particularly with youth involved with DJS, consistent with the Scope of Services and Tasks previously described. *Applicants should include a letter(s) of support attesting to their qualifications and experience. These may be from youth previously served, previous funders, or relevant community partners.* (6,000 characters)

C. Program Details: Describe what features (curriculum, credentials to be earned, on-the-job training, equipment) make your program outstanding and contribute to high rates of success. *Applicants must include a one-page fact sheet that will be used to market the proposed program and recruit youth.* (6,000 characters)

D. Measurable Outcomes: Present outcomes data from prior job training/employment programs for DJS youth that provide evidence that your program will be successful. Explain your experience in managing data related to the performance measures, including any data collection strategies and tools that you have found useful. (9,000 characters)

E. Personnel: List all instructional personnel and describe their industry qualifications and teaching experience. List support professionals who will be interacting with the youth (e.g., counselors, placement specialists) and describe their credentials for working with the target population. (3,000 characters)

F. Partnerships: Outline partnerships you have developed, especially private-sector employers, and additional resources you or your partners will leverage to increase the quality of this investment. *Applicants should include letters of commitment from any partner contributing resources to the proposed project.* (6,000 characters)

G. Proposed Fees and Costs: Provide detail / cost breakdown associated with the scope of work. Be sure to detail the fees and costs to be covered in the per student rate proposed.

ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

In addition to the standard Terms and Conditions to be outlined in the grant contract, organizations receiving awards must comply with the following:

1. Make key staff available to attend trainings as required by FLBC and/or DJS.

Exhibit A

RFQ - RB21 Jobs DJS CORPS Youth

2. Ensure that accurate and complete entries, at the prescribed frequencies, are made to Efforts To Outcomes (ETO), the electronic case management system.
3. Submit timely & accurate reports on program operations and youth wages with supporting documentation as required.
4. Submit monthly invoices to FLBC.
5. Submit with this application the following:
 - A letter of support from:
 - a youth served by the organization, and/or
 - a previous funder, and/or
 - a pertinent community partner
 - A letter of commitment from a community partner contributing resources to the project (if applicable)
 - A one-page fact sheet designed to market the program and recruit youth