

Office of Child Support
Services

September 18, 2023

150 Greenwich Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Occupational Skills Training Service Providers:

The New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) Office of Child Support Services (OCSS) is seeking partner organizations that provide employment training and placement services and wish to receive referrals from OCSS of noncustodial parents interested in services. The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to identify interested organizations who, if selected, would enter into a non-financial agreement with OCSS and be included in a list of partner organizations to which noncustodial parents may be referred.

I. Purpose of the RFI (E-PIN 06924Y0199)

Objective

The objective of this RFI is to expand OCSS' referral portfolio to include appropriately qualified organizations which offer employment training and placement programs to noncustodial parents in New York City. By having a more formal relationship with job training and placement programs, OCSS hopes to 1) increase NCP's financial support for their children; 2) engage more parents with child support services; and 3) improve their relationships with their children.

II. Current Program Model

Background

The NYC HRA Office of Child Support Services (OCSS) serves over 250,000 families. OCSS puts children first by helping both parents provide for the economic and social well-being, health, and stability of their children. Our mission is reflected in our services, which includes establishing parentage, obtaining child support and medical support orders from Family Court, and collecting, distributing, and enforcing child support payments.

OCSS also provides noncustodial parents (NCPs) with a range of resources and services to help each individual meet their child support obligations and manage their child support case(s), including:

- Navigating the legal child support process,
- Obtaining a child support payment order that aligns with their income,
- Connecting NCPs to employment and job-readiness programs,
- Implementing debt reduction programs that help NCPs reduce arrears owed to government agencies, such as our "Pay it Off" and Arrears Cap & Arrears Credit programs.

The child support program is among the most effective anti-poverty programs in the country. In New York City, the program keeps tens of thousands of low-income families from falling into poverty each year.

Over the years, the child support program has evolved from a system focused on recovering the costs of cash assistance to one that recognizes that having both parents involved in a child's life can bring the child a wide range of benefits. We recognize that while most noncustodial parents (NCPs) want to support their children, some may need help removing the barriers that prevent them from doing so. This view, supported by years of academic research and our experience with the tens of thousands of New Yorkers we serve each year, has informed the creation of an innovative set of programs that we provide to assist noncustodial parents. These include programs to connect noncustodial parents to employment, reduce or eliminate child support debt, and simplify the process of aligning child support orders with noncustodial parents' current income.

To meet the immediate employment needs of parents who are obligated to pay support, OCSS currently offers parents several ways to get help finding employment. Parents appearing in Family Court can be assigned to a Parent Support Program (PSP) case manager who then makes referrals to employment services and other programs to address barriers to paying support. PSP case managers can specifically refer parents to the Support Through Employment Program (STEP) which uses HRA-contracted workforce development partners to help parents prepare for and find employment. OCSS also refers parents to the City's Workforce1 services and encourages noncustodial parents to enroll in HRA's TXT-2-Work program. Our referral options will expand to those selected via this RFI process.

Other noncustodial parents may seek and benefit from the opportunity to increase their skills in order to find employment in an occupational sector offering higher wages, employment benefits and advancement potential. Many of these parents have some work skills and experience but may not qualify for jobs that require postsecondary training or a credential. Between 2018 and May 2022, OCSS participated in Families Forward, a national research demonstration program to connect noncustodial parents to job training in in-demand occupational sectors. Through Families Forward, over 400 parents have received job training and placement services. Organizations responding to this RFI should highlight similar services or models they offer.

To learn more about our current employment services, please visit <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/ocss-jobs-and-training.page>.

Number of Noncustodial Parents on OCSS Caseload - Potential Referral Numbers:

OCSS serves a large number of parents who are unable to fully meet their child support obligations due to low earnings or underemployment. OCSS has approximately 124,359 noncustodial parents on its caseload with a child support order for one or more children under the age of 18. About 33,400, or 27 percent, of these parents made no child support payments within that year. Another 46,100, or 37 percent, made partial payments.

Desired Offerings by Job Training Programs

Noncustodial parent's interest and participation in OCSS' Families Forward Demonstration Program demonstrates the value of connecting parents with job skills training. As of the end of June 2022, 494 noncustodial parents met the basic Families Forward eligibility and were referred to training, 350 had graduated, and 208 had been placed into full-time within sector employment.

With this RFI, OCSS' vision is to create an on-going comprehensive employment assistance referral network for noncustodial parents that enables them to improve their earning capacity, build their job skills and connect to good paying jobs so that they are better able to make regular child support payments and prevent debt accumulation over the long term. As such, we will create a job training and placement provider referral list to facilitate this network.

III. Information Requested

OCSS is seeking partners to whom we can refer noncustodial parents for the following services:

- Sector-specific occupational skills training for current job openings in the NYC area.
- Sector-contextualized pre-employment and career readiness services.
- Job placement services post-training graduation
- Post-employment retention, re-employment, and advancement services.

IV. Selection Criteria

a. Selection Criteria. Submissions will be evaluated based on the following:

Organization Experience

OCSS will use the below criteria to select organizations for our job training and placement provider distribution list. Organizations must:

- Proposers would be an established nonprofit, for-profit, or government entity with five (5) years of successful experience providing occupational skills training and employment services at low or no cost to unemployed and/or underemployed individuals.
- Proposers would provide Occupational Skills Training in NYC that leads to a locally or nationally recognized credential (preferred) for local jobs that are in high demand, pay above minimum wage at entry-level, and provide a clear and realistic path of wage growth or potential for career advancement for most that enter the occupation.
- Proposers would provide career counseling to help participants complete training and help them understand the needs, requirements, and culture of their chosen occupations and prospective employers.
- Proposers would have relationships with employers and provide job development and placement services to facilitate graduates' entry into positions for which they have been trained. Services must include outreach to employers in the targeted sectors as well as hands-on job placement support, including refining resumes for specific jobs, conducting mock interviews that address industry-specific questions prospective employers might ask and referrals of job candidates to specific job openings.
- Proposers would provide post-placement retention and advancement services for at least one (1) year after training to help graduates address potential barriers to keeping a job, to help with reemployment in case of job loss and to plan for future advancement.

Next Steps

OCSS will create a list of qualified organizations that respond to and meet the requirements of this Request for Information (RFI). The list of approved vendors will be distributed to our clients at several points of contact as well as published on our website. We will also share the list of selected providers by other means such as mailings or text messages to parents in our database. Clients will self-select the sector they are interested in pursuing. An OCSS staff person will meet with interested clients to describe the available trainings and enrollment requirements; to confirm the client's motivation and ability to commit to attend a training program; and to refer the client to training as appropriate.

As part of being a selected vendor, OCSS will provide a dedicated Customer Service staff to assist with answering case-related questions for your clients.

Be advised that inclusion on this list does not constitute an endorsement from the City of New York or OCSS. This list will be distributed to our clients with the express purpose of serving as a reference. Our intention is to reissue this RFI and refresh the list every three (3) years.

If at any time the services you provide and/or location in which you provide services have changed, please contact us with this new information within one month of the change.

V. Submission Requirements

RFI Due Date: 10/30/2023

Submission Information: Completed “RFI Occupational Skills Training Provider Information Sheet”

The “RFI Occupational Skills Training Provider Information Sheet”

will be submitted through PASSPort.

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Be advised that inclusion on this list does not constitute an endorsement from HRA/OCSS. The now Occupational Skills Training Provider RFI distribution list will serve as a reference list for the Occupational Skills Training Providers.

If at any point you would like your organization to be removed from the list, OCSS needs to be notified two (2) months prior to when you wish to cease receiving referrals.

If you are interested in responding to this RFI and being placed on our referral list, please develop a response as indicated in the **Occupational Skills Training Services Provider Information Sheet**. Please ensure you review and upload all the required documents listed on the form.

Use of PASSPort:

PASSPort is a web-based system maintained by the City of New York to manage procurement. To submit a proposal to the upcoming RFI, all vendors must create an account within the PASSPort system. Please visit www.nyc.gov/passport to create an account or to log into the system to view this RFI. To respond to this RFI, vendors must first complete and submit an electronic prequalification application using the City's HHS Accelerator system.

REQUIRED SERVICE PRE-QUALIFICATIONS

The Occupational Skills Training Services Provider RFI will be released exclusively through the PASSPort system.

To submit a prequalification application to become eligible to apply for this and other HHS RFIs, please visit <http://www.nyc.gov/passport>.

We will notify you of your selection within two (2) months of receiving your response. If you would like more information about the child support program, you can visit nyc.gov/hra/ocss.

You can also email Tracy Mack at tracy.mack2@dfa.state.ny.us with questions about the RFI and child support.

This is an exciting opportunity for all of us to help strengthen families and provide them with an important resource to support both noncustodial parents and their children. I look forward to a meaningful partnership with your organization.

Sincerely,

Frances Pardus-Abbadessa