

State of Iowa Juvenile Court Services



June 24, 2026

Responses to Questions received regarding Multisystemic Therapy (MST) RFP JUV-27-MS-07-001:

1. This proposal specifies that the Staff must be clinically licensed and trained but doesn't specify that the Director/Supervisor needs to be MST Certified by completing the 30 day online training, 2 days on site training, and be certified to complete the Initial Diagnostic Interviews. Also, the Director/Supervisor must hold a level of licensure that allows them to diagnose. MST requires that a team of therapists be supervised by an MST Director / Supervisor who oversees an MST team of therapists, but so clarifying that this structure is expected as well.

Q1 Answer: MST Certification is required, and all staff will be expected to meet MST certification requirements.

2. MST Training covers many of the training topics listed. Are these Iowa specific trainings that are in addition to all of training completed to become a certified MST therapist?

Q2 Answer: Any training topics listed which are not included for MST certification, shall also be completed by the Contractor.

3. The contact requirement for the therapist to see the client within 24 hours after the referral does not match the MST Model. MST requires that the Director or Supervisor completes the Initial Diagnostic interview to see if the child meets diagnostic criteria to qualify for MST services. A therapist is assigned after the Diagnostic Interview qualifies the youth for this service. MST guidelines say the IDI will be completed within 1-2 weeks. Can you clarify if your expectation is that the provider not follow that MST protocol?

Q3 Answer: The expectation is not to ignore MST protocol, but the importance is on timely access to MST services as it is a critical component of effective intervention. Rapid engagement supports youth stabilization, enhances family involvement, reduces recidivism risk, and ensures alignment with both court expectations and evidence-based practice standards. The intent is for the Contractor to make face to face contact with the referred youth to initiate services within 24 hour of receipt of the referral.

4. In order to determine how many therapists an agency would anticipate hiring, do you know many clients at a time do you anticipate will need MST services?

Q4 Answer: For calendar year 2025, the average number of youth served per month was approximately 6 JCS youth with 10 youth being served per month overall.

5. Below is the MST Position Statement regarding BA Level Staff:
Position Statement

- Qualified master's-level applicants are highly recommended as the first choice when hiring MST therapists
- Highly skilled, qualified bachelor's-level applicants may be considered under the following conditions
- There is an insufficient pool of qualified master's-level applicants to fill available positions.

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- Local funding and/or professional requirements allow for bachelor's-level staff to serve on MST teams.
- The limited pool of qualified master's-level applicants is due to systemic gaps in the availability of such applicants overall and NOT due to the fact that MST therapist salaries are not competitive in the local market.
- It is recommended that a maximum be set of no more than 33% bachelor's-level therapists on any given team.
- In settings in which the pool of qualified master's-level applicants is extremely limited, the system or MST program can consult with their MST Expert about the possibility of an exception to allow more than 33% of a given team to be composed of bachelor's-level therapists.
- *Note that MST model requirements do NOT require MST therapists to have professional licensure, whether they are bachelor's level or master's level.*

Would you consider allowing an agency to follow these guidelines?

Q5 Answer: All staff delivering MST services must meet the minimum qualifications outlined in the RFP, which require that they be Master's-prepared clinician and hold appropriate clinical licensure in the State of Iowa at the time services are provided.

6. What has the historical annual contract amount been for the current MST provider?

Q6 Answer Historical annual contract amounts are contained within the table below. Medicaid began reimbursing for MST services in FY2025, impacting the annual contract maximum.

Fiscal year	Annual contract max
FY2021	\$120,000
FY2022	\$240,000
FY2023	\$240,000
FY2024	\$240,000
FY2025	\$120,000
FY2026	\$50,000

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7. What were the actual annual expenditures associated with the contract?

Q7 Answer: Please see the answer to Question 6 above.

8. How many referrals are received annually?

Q8 Answer: Historically over the past 5 years, an average of 24 JCS youth per year were referred.

9. What is the average active census at any given time?

Q9 Answer: Please see the answer to Question 4 above

10. What staffing model has historically been utilized to operate the program successfully?

Q10 Answer: JCS leaves staffing decisions to the Respondent(s) to determine; the MST certification and requirements must be met by the Successful Respondent.

11. Is funding available to support startup costs, licensing fees, training, and implementation?

Q11 Answer: Respondents can submit cost proposal options to include these fees for consideration. Final award amounts remain subject to negotiation, availability of funds, and contract performance.

12. Who is the current provider, and why is the contract being rebid?

Q12 Answer: Vera French Community Mental Health Center is the current provider for this service in JCS District 7. The existing contract, which has been in place for six years, is set to expire on June 30, 2026, with no additional renewal options and is therefore required to be reissued through a competitive bidding process.

13. Are Medicaid revenues retained by the provider?

Q13 Answer: The Successful Respondent will be responsible for all Medicaid billing and revenue collection, as well as eligibility consideration, and would retain any revenue received via Medicaid.

14. Is the funding structure based on a fixed allocation, cost reimbursement, fee-for-service, case rate, Medicaid billing, or a blended model?

Q14 Answer: The funding structure should be a blended model. Please see the Cost Proposal section page 39 of the RFP for Cost Proposal requirements and options.

15. What historical outcomes and completion rates have been achieved under the current contract?

Q15 Answer: Under the current contract, 120 cases discharged during the reporting period. Only 2 youth referred did not receive the service. Approximately 92% of cases completed treatment.

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16. The RFP states that All staff providing MST therapy services with regard to the RFP must be a Masters-prepared (clinical degreed) professional and must be clinically licensed in the State of Iowa (page 20). Would individuals completing graduate programs in counseling or social work, or individuals fulfilling internship or practicum requirements while working toward licensure be eligible to provide services as well?

Q16 Answer: No. Individuals who have not yet obtained a Master's degree and/or are not fully clinically licensed in the State of Iowa are not eligible to provide MST therapy services under this contract. All staff delivering MST services must meet the minimum qualifications outlined in the RFP, which require that they be a Master's-prepared clinician and hold appropriate clinical licensure in the State of Iowa at the time services are provided.