



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Recruitment, Retention, Training, and Support (RRTS) ACFS 24-002

Ryan Roovaart
Iowa Department of Human Services
Hoover Building, First Floor
1305 East Walnut Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Phone: 515-281-4598
RRTS_ACFS-24-002@dhs.state.ia.us

RFP Purpose.

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit proposals from qualified Bidders who are capable of providing the Iowa Department of Human Services (Agency) with the Resource Family Recruitment, Retention, Training, and Support (RRTS) services as described in this RFP. Resource Families are defined for this RFP and the resulting Contract as individuals who are licensed to provide Foster Family care, are approved to adopt, or are dually licensed and approved. The Agency is seeking a single Contractor who can provide a statewide service, including a comprehensive, connected approach to recruiting, retaining, training, and supporting Resource Families. Through this RFP, the Agency seeks a qualified Contractor to provide the following services statewide, as defined in the Scope of Work:

- a) Provide services to recruit and retain Resource Families that are available to be successfully matched with Children who need out-of-home care with a licensed Foster Family or an approved Adoptive Family, including support throughout the Foster Family licensing, re-licensing, adoption approval process, post Subsidized Guardianship and adoption processes.
- b) Coordinate with and recruit non-licensed caregivers including Relatives to become licensed Foster Families.
- c) Provide training required for Foster Families to receive and maintain their foster home license, and trainings for adoptive parents, Kin and Fictive Kin caregivers.
- d) Match Children who are placed into care with a Resource Family that has the skills, training, and ability to meet the Children's needs.
- e) Develop and administer a support program for Resource Families as described in this RFP.
- f) Develop specialized services to increase statewide capacity to serve teens and those transitioning to adulthood.
- g) Maintain a connection to post Subsidized Guardianship and post adopt families, including outreach, supports and services.

Duration of Contract.

The Agency anticipates executing a contract that will have an initial 2-year contract term with the ability to extend the contract for 4 additional 1-year terms. The Agency will have the sole discretion to extend the contract.

Bidder Eligibility Requirements.

The Agency will only consider Proposals for contract award from Bidders who meet the following requirements. Additional information on these requirements can be found below and in Attachment F Bidder Accreditation Form. Bidders are required to complete and submit Attachment F along with required documents as a part of their bid proposal.

Licensing

- a. Currently licensed by the Agency to provide Foster Care and adoption services in Iowa as a licensed Child-Placing Agency; or
- b. Currently licensed in good standing in another state to provide Foster Care and adoption services. Organizations that are licensed in another state will be expected to become a licensed Child-Placing Agency in Iowa prior to the execution of a Contract if the organization is the selected Bidder.

Accreditation

- a. Accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA) for one or more of services including Child protective services, family preservation and stabilization services, Foster Care services, or kinship care services and affirms their commitment to maintain that accreditation during the Contract period; or

- b. Accredited by the Joint Commission for Behavioral Health Care Services and affirms their commitment to maintain that accreditation during the Contract periods; or
- c. Accredited by the Council on Accreditation for Rehabilitation Services (CARF) for Child and Youth services and affirms their commitment to maintain that accreditation during the Contract period; or
- d. Committed to apply for accreditation with any of these three organizations, if not currently accredited, within three (3) months of executing a Contract with the Agency, receive accreditation within twenty-one (21) months of the Contract execution date, and maintain accreditation for the remainder of the Contract period.

Procurement Timetable

There are no exceptions to any deadlines for the Bidder; however, the Agency reserves the right to change the dates. Times provided are in Central Time.

Event	Date
Agency Issues RFP Notice to Targeted Small Business Website (48 hours):	May 23, 2022
Agency Issues RFP to Bid Opportunities Website	May 25, 2022
Bidder Letter of Intent to Bid (Attachment I) Due By	June 9, 2022 at 3:00 PM
Bidder Written Questions Round 1(Attachment J) Due By	June 9, 2022, at 3:00 PM
Agencies Response Questions Round 1 Issued By	Wed 6/22/2022
Bidders' Conference Will Be Held on the Following Date and Time	July 7, 2022 at 1:00 PM
Bidder Written Questions Round 2 (Attachment J) Due By	July 20, 2022 at 3:00 PM
Agency Responses to Questions Round 2 Issued By	August 3, 2022
Bidder Proposals and any Amendments to Proposals Due By	August 24, 2022 at 3:00 PM
Agency Announces Apparent Successful Bidder/Notice of Intent to Award	December 11, 2022
Contract Negotiations and Execution of the Contract Completed	March 29, 2023
Anticipated Start Date for the Provision of Services	July 1, 2023

Section 1 Background and Scope of Work

1.1 Background.

This RFP is designed to provide Bidders with the information necessary for the preparation of competitive Bid Proposals for providing the RRTS services as described in this RFP and for meeting other requirements and Deliverables described herein. A main goal of the executed contracts is to adhere to the Family First Blueprint for Iowa's Future Child Welfare System (Attachment L), the Cultural Equity Alliance Guiding Principles (Attachment H), and the DHS Child Welfare Model of Practice (Attachment O) that are guided by the principles of safety, Permanency, family connections and wellbeing for Children in care.

Interested Bidders should be aware the contracts executed as a result of this RFP will contain performance incentives. The Contractor will have the opportunity to earn additional payments based on the Contractor's performance. Subsequent Contract renewal decisions may be contingent on Contractor performance. The Agency has identified desired results through performance measures and targets and will monitor the results achieved under the Contract.

The Contractor shall work in collaboration with all Child Welfare contracted services, including Family Centered Services (FCS), and Crisis Intervention, Stabilization, and Reunification (CISR) Services to align service provision to meet the needs of Children in all levels of out-of-home care. These contracted services provide support and interventions to Children and their families in a coordinated manner without duplication of service.

The RFP process is for the Agency's benefit and is intended to provide the Agency with competitive information to assist in the selection process. It is not intended to be comprehensive. Each Bidder is responsible for determining all factors necessary for submission of a comprehensive Bid Proposal. The Agency adheres to all applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations when entering into a Contract for services.

1.1.1 Future Considerations and Integration of Services for Resource Families

1.1.1.1 Concept Moving Forward

The Agency has made a number of determinations in advance of issuing this RFP. These include the following:

- a) The Agency has decided that for this RFP there will be one awarded contract for the State. The expectation will be that the bidder will encourage the movement of Children back to their communities of origin (where feasible) to preserve connections of youth to their families, home communities, schools, spiritual connections and community-based supports as well as achieve better outcomes for Resource Families.
- b) The Agency has decided to emphasize and mandate the use of a Specialized Caseworker Model during the provision of services. Specializing roles allows the contractor to select and train staff to roles that meet their abilities, where they are trained and dedicated where they are needed most, working directly with families. The specialized roles must include Recruitment and Retention, Inquiry, and Training; Licensing; Support; and a Centralized Statewide Matching Unit.
- c) The Agency has decided to emphasize Post Adopt and Subsidized Guardianship Services to support and prevent disrupted adoptions.
- d) The Agency will continue to pursue a further integration of Child Welfare services through collaboration across Agency contracts and community providers.

1.1.2 Recruitment, Retention, Training, and Support for Resource Families Background

Child Welfare services are primarily focused on promoting safety, Permanency, family connections and well-being for Children, a philosophy consistent with the expectations of the Federal Government under the Child and Family Services Review process, the DHS Child Welfare Model of Practice. The Agency is continually striving to improve outcomes for Children and families who are involved in the Child Welfare system. To that end, the

Guiding Principles for Iowa's future Child Welfare system are in the forefront of planning to improve outcomes for Children and families.

1.1.2.1 Guiding Principles for Iowa's Child Welfare System

The Guiding Principles of Iowa's Child Welfare System state that safety for Children emerges and is enhanced when stakeholders do all of the following:

- a) Families, Children, youth, and caregivers will be treated with dignity and respect while having a voice in the decisions that affect them.
- b) The ideal place for Children is with their families; therefore, we will ensure Children remain in their own homes whenever safely possible.
- c) When services away from the family are necessary, Children will receive them in the most family-like setting and together with siblings whenever possible.
- d) Permanency and connections with siblings and caring and supportive adults will be preserved and encouraged.
- e) Children will be reunited with their families and siblings as soon as safely possible.
- f) Community stakeholders and tribes will be actively engaged to protect Children and support families.
- g) Services will be tailored to families and Children to meet their unique needs.
- h) Child Welfare professionals will be supported through ongoing development and mentoring to promote success and retention.
- i) Leadership will be demonstrated within all levels of the Child Welfare system.
- j) Decision making will be outcome based, resource-driven, and continuously evaluated for improvement.

1.1.2.2 Services Overview and Program Statistics

Family Foster Care, adoption, and Subsidized Guardianship are three critical Child Welfare services administered by the Agency. Family Foster Care provides 24-hour care of Children who are unable to remain in their own homes for a temporary period of time, while also offering services to families and Children in order to simultaneously reunify Children with their parents and implement plans for Permanency. The adoption program secures permanent homes for Children in Foster Care when the rights of the Children's birth parents have been terminated and the Children are placed under the guardianship of the Agency. The Subsidized Guardianship Program provides financial assistance to caregivers who agree to be the legal guardian for a youth who is in family Foster Care. Guardianship is a safe alternative to adoption, providing Permanency for the youth without requiring formal termination of parental rights. The Agency is also responsible for Children who are placed with Relatives and Fictive Kin by providing services to the Children, their families, and their caregivers. These arrangements are called kinship Placements when the caregiver is unlicensed.

The Recruitment, Retention, Training, and Support of Resource Families is an integral service to improve the safety, Permanency, family connections and well-being of Children in care. Children need Permanency in their relationships with adults who unconditionally care about them and who are committed to maintaining their connection to their Kin and their culture. Children need to be stable in their living situation and receive care that meets their individual needs. Research clearly demonstrates that it is detrimental for Children in Foster Care to drift from place to place without the anchor of a permanent family. Research also suggests that Children and youth in Foster Care suffer from loss of connection to their Kin and culture and as a result experience a strong sense of loss to their roots, rituals, and family traditions that define them. Permanency and Stability cannot be obtained without the availability and maintenance of a pool of qualified Resource Families from which appropriate Placement matches can be made.

The following data was sourced from child welfare FACS as of 2/10/22. These are unduplicated counts in SFY21:

- 2,370 Licensed Foster family homes
- 3,870 Children Placed in licensed family foster care
- 4,024 Children Placed in unlicensed relative care
- 880 Children Placed in unlicensed fictive care
- 923 Children who are placed in congregate care setting
- 1,265 Children who are eligible for adoption pre subsidy
- 996 finalized adoptions in 2021
- 1,863 Adoptive Families Served

The population of all Children in Foster Care in Iowa as of February 10, 2022, reflects the following statewide demographics:

Race

- Caucasian 72.1%
- African American 14.09%
- Native American .5%
- Asian 0.6%
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander 0.5%
- Multi-racial 6.6%
- Undetermined 2.3%

Ethnicity

- Not Hispanic 86.6%
- Hispanic 9.1%
- Unable to determine 3.8%

Sex

- Male 53.2%
- Female 46.7%

Age

- Under 5 38.5%
- 6 to 11 25.2%
- 12 to 15 19.0%
- 16 and older 17.3%

Detailed data information can be found in Attachment G.

Children come into Foster Care with a variety of emotional, behavioral, psychological, educational, developmental, and medical needs. In order to ensure a Child's Stability while in care and to move toward Permanency, there must be an adequate pool of Resource Families that are skilled and trained to meet each Child's individual needs. A critical component of this RFP is matching Children coming into care to the Resource Family that can best meet the Child's needs, so the Child's first Placement is their only Placement whenever possible. This is accomplished by:

- a) Recruiting and retaining Resource Families with the skills and abilities to meet the needs of Children
- b) Selecting Placement options based on a match of the Resource Family's abilities, skills, and training to meet the needs of the Child coming into care so that Children are matched to families and not just placed where there is an available bed
- c) Providing training and support to Resource Families to enhance their skills and abilities to care for the Children placed in their home

- d) Actively promoting the importance of maintaining a Child's connections to family and reunification efforts while supporting concurrent efforts to achieve Permanency with Resource Families
- e) Collaborating with community providers, contracted service providers, and other entities to provide enhanced supports to families that care for behaviorally challenging Children or Children with mental health concerns, and
- f) Recruiting and retaining Resource Families that are open to the possibility of becoming a permanent home to Children they foster.

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoption Assistance Act of 2008 placed increased emphasis on keeping a Child in his or her home school and community whenever possible. Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 requires state Child Welfare agencies and state departments of education to collaborate to improve educational Stability for Children in Foster Care. Provisions of the Act require states to ensure a Child in Foster Care remains in their school of origin unless it is determined not to be in the Child's best interest to do so. The provisions of the Act make recruitment and retention of Resource Families in key areas critical to allowing Children to remain in their schools of origin. By keeping Children in their home schools and communities, it preserves the Child's connections to friends, teachers, neighbors, extended family, and other supports while the Child is in Placement. Research has shown a direct correlation between recruitment, matching, support, and retention. Families must be recruited that are able to meet the needs of the Children coming into care. Real time information about a Resource Family's strengths, skills, training, and ability must be known in order to match with the Resource Family who can best meet the needs of a Child coming into care. Timely and appropriate support must be provided to the Resource Family to maintain the Child's Placement. These factors are critical in Resource Family satisfaction and retention. When Resource Families have positive experiences, feel supported, appreciated, respected, and are treated as critical members of a Child's team, they will often recruit other families to become Resource Families. Recruitment, matching, support, and retention are therefore integral components dependent on each other rather than separate activities. A Child's need for safety, Permanency, and well-being are dependent on having the right Resource Families available for them and being matched to the Resource Family that can best meet their needs.

Children experience trauma when they are removed from their families and placed into Foster Care. It is critical to a Child's healing and well-being that the first Resource Family is the only Placement for the Child. In order for Children to not experience lateral moves, accurate, firsthand real time information about Resource Families and the Children coming into care is crucial in order to make the best match possible. Matching is more than just finding an available Resource Family with an opening. Having an accurate assessment of the Resource Family's skills, training, and ability to meet the specific individual needs of the Child is necessary to ensure a Child's Stability. The structure of the matching process must be organized so that knowledge of the Resource Family is an integral part of the matching process.

In order for Resource Families to have the skills required to meet the diverse and unique needs of Children in care, they must have training that is timely, current, and relevant. Resource Families need pre-service training that provides them with information about the licensing process, what to possibly expect regarding Children's behaviors and needs, the importance of maintaining a Child's connections to family and community, and the need to work as a member of the Child's team so the family can make an informed decision about becoming a licensed and/or approved Resource Family. Resource Families are required to complete pre-service training, and, in addition, applicants will be required to complete First Aid, CPR, Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter Training, Reasonable and Prudent Parenting Training, and Medication Management prior to licensure.

Training is also an important component of support. Resource Families need trainings that enhance their skills related to the Children they care for in their homes. In-service trainings shall be varied and offered with a frequency that allows families to receive continuing training not only to meet foster home licensing

requirements of six hours per year, but more importantly to enhance their skills at the time they need it. Individual training plans will be developed to ensure appropriate trainings are completed. Skills addressed by such trainings include but are not limited to:

- a) Understanding substance use/misuse and mental health issues
- b) Identifying and addressing trauma and the effects of trauma
- c) Techniques to address mental or behavioral health needs in order to maintain a stable Placement
- d) Developmental milestones for children
- e) Cultural awareness training, also known as intercultural, cross-cultural and cultural competency training
- f) Understand the continuity of family relationships, including kin/Fictive Kin connections

The Agency's goal is to have Resource Families who can provide a safe, stable Placement based on the Child's Permanency goal. Children may need care for a short time or may need care for several months. Resource Families who will provide short-term care and who will actively participate in reunification efforts are needed. Also, Resource Families who will actively participate in reunification efforts but then provide Permanency to Children who cannot be reunited with their birth family are also needed. Resource Families must be able to support Concurrent Planning by helping reunification efforts while also making the decision of whether the family can be a Child's permanent family should reunification not occur. Resource Families often experience disappointment, sadness, and loss when Children they have cared for and committed themselves to return home or are placed with a Relative. Resource Families need support and guidance to help work through this process.

The Agency has a goal of increasing the number of Kin/Fictive kin placements becoming licensed foster parents. The contractor will provide information to all Kin/Fictive Kin on benefits of licensure as referred by the Agency. The contractor will coordinate with the kinship specialist (if applicant is participating with Kinship Navigator) in the transition from the Kinship Navigator Program to the formal licensure process.

The Agency has a goal of reducing racial and ethnic disproportionality of Children and youth who are placed in out-of-home care. The Agency also has the goal of developing a larger pool of families that match the race and ethnicity of Children who do come into care. The recruitment and retention of Resource Families that match the race and ethnicity of Children in care will be a focus of this Contract. All services, provided through the Contract will be provided in a culturally competent manner. In meeting the requirements outlined in this RFP, the Contractor shall ensure the provision of effective, equitable, understandable, and respectful supports and services that are responsive to diverse cultural beliefs and practices, preferred languages, health literacy, and other communication needs. Contractor shall adhere to the CEA Guiding Principles adopted by the Agency (Attachment H).

The Contractor shall participate and collaborate with the Agency, other contracted service providers, such as FCS Kinship Navigator Program, community providers, and other stakeholders to identify gaps in the continuum of care provided to Children in the Child Welfare system. The Contractor will then participate and collaborate on strategies to fill those gaps, including specialized projects the Agency may initiate.

Resource Families are valuable team members working toward safety, Permanency, and well-being for Children. These families need support in the form of pre-service training, ongoing support throughout their Placement experience, Subsidized Guardianship and post-adoption support and information in order to provide the best care possible for Children. This RFP is a part of the Agency's efforts to support Resource Families in order to improve Permanency outcomes for Children in care.

1.2 RFP General Definitions.

When appearing as capitalized terms in this RFP, including attachments, the following quoted terms (and the plural thereof, when appropriate) have the meanings set forth in this section.

“Agency” means the Iowa Department of Human Services.

“Bid Proposal” or **“Proposal”** means the Bidder’s proposal submitted in response to the RFP.

“Bidder” means the entity that submits a Bid Proposal in response to this RFP.

“Combined Cost Report” means a report that allows the Agency to determine allowable costs for each service across various Agency programs.

“Contractor” means the Bidder who enters into a Contract as a result of this Solicitation.

“Deliverables” means all of the services, goods, products, work, work product, data (including data collected on behalf of the Agency), items, materials and property to be created, developed, produced, delivered, performed, or provided by or on behalf of, or made available through, the Contractor (or any agent, contractor or subcontractor of the Contractor) in connection with any contract resulting from this RFP.

“Invoice” means a Contractor’s claim for payment. At the Agency’s discretion, claims may be submitted on an original invoice from the Contractor or may be submitted on a claim form accepted by the Agency, such as a General Accounting Expenditure (GAX) form.

Definitions Specific to this RFP.

When appearing as capitalized terms in this RFP, including attachments, the following quoted terms (and the plural thereof, when appropriate) have the meanings set forth in this section.

“Accepted Placement Match” means that a family found and recommended by the Contractor upon a referral from the Agency or Juvenile Court Services is considered to be “accepted” if the Agency or Juvenile Court Services agrees to place the Child with the recommended family.

“Administrative Costs” means costs that may include, but are not limited to, such categories as: salary and fringe benefits for administrators and support staff; rent and lease payments; utilities; data collection and data processing costs; printing; communications equipment and services; and other costs necessary to support the delivery of services to Children and families.

“Adoption Respite” means an interval of temporary rest from parenting for Adoptive Families.

“Adoptive Family(ies)” means an approved person or persons who have a Child placed in their home who is legally adopted and entitled to the same benefits as a Child born into the family.

“Available for Matching” means a licensed foster family who is not licensed for a specific child, who is not only providing respite, who has not been on hold continuously for the previous six months, and who has accepted a child in the previous calendar year.

“Behavioral Health Intervention Services (BHIS)” means services provided to Children who are Medicaid eligible and under twenty-one (21) years of age and their families to remediate mental health symptoms and behaviors.

“Bidders” means the organizations that submit Proposals in response to this RFP.

“Business Day” means any day other than a Saturday, Sunday, or State holiday as specified by Iowa Code §1C.2.

“Caseworker” means the Contractor staff depending on their specialized role that completes Foster Care or Adoptive Family home studies, guides Resource Families through licensing and approval, participates in the matching process to help make the best match possible, identifies additional family training needs, ensures completion of training, and supports the Family from initial assessment and throughout the Placement of a Child in the home.

“Child(ren)” means, for establishing Foster Care eligibility, either a person less than eighteen (18) years of age or a person eighteen (18) or nineteen (19) years of age who meets any of the following conditions: is in full-time attendance at an accredited school pursuing a course of study leading to a high school diploma; is attending an instructional program leading to a high school equivalency diploma; or has been identified by the director of special education of the area education Agency as a Child requiring special education, as defined in Iowa Code §234.1.

“Child and Family Services Review” means the process and procedures used by the federal agency of Health and Human Services to monitor and evaluate each state Child Welfare agency in order to promote achievement of safety, Permanency, and well-being for Children that come to the attention of the Child Welfare system and improve the quality of state Child Welfare services.

“Child Care Institution” means a private childcare institution, or a public child care institution which accommodates no more than twenty-five Children and is licensed by the licensing authority responsible for licensing or approval of institutions of this type as meeting the standards established for such licensing. This definition must not include detention facilities, forestry camps, training schools, or any other facility operated primarily for the detention of Children who are determined to be delinquent.

“Child-Placing Agency” means an agency organized within the state of Iowa for the purpose of receiving Children for Placement, supervision, or both in private family homes for Foster Care; or for adoption; or the Placement, supervision, or both of Children who are sixteen (16) years of age and older living in approved supervised apartment living Placements.

“Clinically-Trained Staff” means a person with a master’s (or other advanced) degree in social work, psychology or a related behavioral science and who are licensed in the state of Iowa to practice in their respective field. This may include, but is not limited to, a licensed medical doctor or licensed Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, licensed independent social workers, licensed advanced registered nurse practitioners, licensed psychologists, licensed marriage and family therapists, and licensed mental health counselors.

“Concurrent Planning” means the integrated practice of working towards reunification, while simultaneously planning for adoption or guardianship should reunification not succeed. When reunification is no longer an option, Resource Families play a critical role in providing Permanency through adoption or actively assisting the Child and another family in the transition towards adoption or guardianship.

“Contract Manager” means the Agency staff assigned to policy and protocol development, implementation, and interpretation as it relates to the Contract.

“Contract Owner” means the Agency administrative official who has the authority to make decisions related to the Contract on behalf of the Agency.

“Corrective Action Plan” means a written agreement between a Resource Family and the Agency to address non-compliance with licensing rules by specifying the conditions that must be corrected and the time frame for completion.

“Crisis Intervention, Stabilization, and Reunification (CISR) Services” means the Contract that previously included discrete separate contracts for Foster Group Care Services (FGCS), Child Welfare Emergency Services (CWES), and Supervised Apartment Living (SAL).

“Critical Incident” means a situation involving a Child that results in one of the following:

- Death
- Police calls or other law enforcement involvement or contact
- Mandatory report of abuse, and
- Emergency treatment by medical personnel in or at a hospital, other medical clinic, urgent care provider, or a physician’s office.

“Cultural Competence/Responsiveness” means the ability of individuals and systems to respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, and faiths or religions in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families, tribes, and communities, and protects and preserves the dignity of each.

“Disproportionate Representation” means that a particular racial or ethnic group has a higher, or lower, incidence or percentage of involvement in the various levels of the Child Welfare system in a defined area than the racial or ethnic group’s percentage of the total population in the defined area.

“Emergency Foster Care” means a Foster Care placement in which the timeframe of placement does not exceed 48 hours.

“Family Interaction” means maintaining relationships with siblings, parents, family, and other individuals and to reduce the sense of abandonment and loss which Children experience at Placement.

“Family Centered Services” or “FCS” means the primary Agency purchased interventions, services, and supports to strengthen and preserve connections between Children and their Family as defined by Request for Proposal ACFS 20-006.

“Fictive Kin” means an adult person who is not a Relative of a Child but who has an emotionally significant relationship with the Child or the Child’s family.

“Foster care” means the provision of parental nurturing, including but not limited to the furnishing of food, lodging, training, education, supervision, treatment, or other care, to a Child on a full-time basis by a person, including a Relative or Fictive Kin of the Child, and where the Child is under the Placement, care, or supervision of the department, Juvenile Court Services or tribes with whom the department entered into agreements, pursuant to court order, or according to voluntary placement, but not including a guardian of the Child.

“Family Foster Care” means the 24-hour care and supervision of a Child provided by a licensed foster family. Care includes the provision of food, lodging, clothing, shelter, support, ordinary transportation, recreation, and training which is appropriate for the Child’s age and intellectual and physical capacity. It also includes working with the Child’s birth parents, contributing to the creation and updating of the Child’s life book and personal history, and assisting the Child in maintaining cultural and ethnic connections.

“Foster Family(ies)” means licensed substitute care furnished on a 24-hour a day basis to an eligible Child, in a licensed foster home by a person other than the Child’s parent or guardian. Licensed Family Foster Care shall include, but is not limited to, the provision of food, lodging, training, education, supervision, and health care.

“Foster Family Home” means a home in which an individual person or persons or married couple wishes to provide or is providing, for a period exceeding 24 consecutive hours, board, room, and care for a Child in a single-family living unit.

“Foster Family Respite Care” means an interval of temporary rest from parenting for Foster Families.

“Foster Group Care Services” means the provision of Foster Care provided in facilities licensed as either a community or comprehensive residential facility. A community residential facility provides care for Children who are considered unable to live in a family situation due to social, emotional, or physical disabilities but are capable of interacting in a community environment with a minimum amount of supervision. A comprehensive residential facility provides care and treatment for Children who are unable to live in a family situation due to social, emotional, or physical disabilities and who require varying degrees of supervision as indicated in the individual treatment plan.

“General Recruitment” means strategic recruitment activities designed to attract prospective Resource Families who can provide stable, safe, and nurturing homes to Children in Foster and/or adoptive care. The focus is on drawing in a wide variety of families who have an interest in and capacity for fostering and/or adopting.

“Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children” or **“ICPC”** means a uniform law that has been enacted in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The ICPC establishes a Contract among the states and jurisdictions that ensures orderly procedures for the interstate Placement and post Placement supervision of Children and fixes responsibilities for those involved in placing the Child.

“Juvenile Court Services (JCS)” means an administrative unit that is part of the judicial branch of Iowa government and established in each judicial district pursuant to Iowa Code Ch. 602. JCS provides intake services for all Iowa Youth who are alleged to have committed a delinquent act. JCS also supervises and provides services to those Youth who are adjudicated delinquent or those Youth who have committed a Delinquent act but who have not been adjudicated delinquent by the Juvenile Court.

“Kinship Care” means the care of a Child by a Relative or suitable person, providing full-time nurturing and protection of Children by Relatives, members of their tribes or clans, godparents, stepparents, or other adults who have a kinship or family-like bond with the Child (often referred to as “Fictive Kin”).

“Kinship Caregiver” means kin (e.g., grandparent, sibling, etc.) and Fictive Kin (e.g., godparents, close family friends, etc.) providing care for a Child.

“Packet(s)” means the collection of items and forms that the Contractor submits to the Agency upon the completion of initial or renewal foster home licensing and adoption approval activities. A Packet is complete when all required items and forms are included in the Packet that the Contractor submits to the Agency.

“Permanency” means a Child has a safe, stable custodial environment in which to grow up, a life-long relationship with a nurturing caregiver, and is able to explore and retain significant connections to family members to the greatest extent possible.

“Placement” means each physical setting in which a Child in Foster Care resides.

“Post-Adoption Services” means services provided to families who have adopted a Child or Children who are eligible for the Agency’s adoption subsidy program.

“Practice Standards” means a set of written guidelines that define what staff in a program does, that is, the tasks and skills performed in the course of fulfilling the Contract requirements and meet the needs of the population served. Standards describe what is considered “best practice”.

“Pre-Adoptive Family” means an approved person or persons who have a Child under the guardianship of the Agency placed for adoption in their home, but the adoption has not been finalized.

“Quality Assurance” means the procedures established and activities undertaken by Contractors to ensure that these services are delivered in accordance with requirements established by the Recruitment, Retention, Training, and Support Contract.

“Relative” means an individual related to a Child within the fourth degree of consanguinity of affinity, by marriage, or through adoption. Relative includes the parent of a sibling of the Child if the sibling’s parent’s parental rights were not previously terminated in relation to the Child.

“Relative Home Study” means the written report that must be completed when the Agency is exploring the Child’s Placement with a non-custodial parent or another relative of the identified Child. The format for the Home Study is the Relative Home Study Format, RC-0078.

“Resource Family(ies)” means, for the purposes of this RFP, encompasses all individuals who are licensed to provide Foster Family care, are approved to adopt, or are dually licensed and approved.

“Resource Family Home Study” means the initial written report and the annual update containing documentation of the family’s compliance with Iowa Administrative Code 441- Chapter 113, Licensing and Regulation of Foster Family Homes and/or Iowa Administrative Code 441-Chapter 200, Adoption Services. The written report contains an assessment of the family’s ability to provide Foster Care or adoption and a licensing or approval recommendation.

“Service Area” means the grouping of the 99 counties in the State into defined geographic areas for improved, localized administration of programs. See the Service Area map in Attachment M.

“Service Area Recruitment Plan” means the strategic plan for increasing a Service Area’s pool of Foster and Adoptive Families that can meet the needs of Children entering or in need of Placement.

“Service Contract Specialist” means the Agency Worker assigned to provide review and oversight of a Contractor for an Agency Contract.

“Solution Focused Meeting” or “SFM” means a gathering of Family members, friends, formal and informal supports, with the assistance of the SFM facilitator, to draw on past successes of the Family in problem solving and work in partnership with the Family to enhance the safety of Children. SFM activities and anticipated outcomes are based on which SBC milestone the family is in at the time. SBC engagement and relapse prevention strategies will be utilized in the facilitation of the meeting.

“Specialized Caseworker Model” means the integrated approach to Foster Family licensing/Adoptive Family approval, training, matching, support, and developing families who are licensed Foster Families or dually licensed and approved to adopt by utilizing the four categories of work outlined by the Agency.

“Specific-Child Recruitment (Adoption)” means strategic outreach activities designed to attract prospective or currently licensed/approved Resource Families that can meet the needs of the specific Child in need of adoptive Placement.

“Stability” means the extent to which the Child’s current Placement is determined to be free from the risk of an unplanned disruption, or a move not directly related to the achievement of the Child’s Permanency goal, in the foreseeable future.

“Subsidized Guardianship” means providing financial assistance to caregivers who agree to be the legal guardian for a youth who is in Family Foster Care, under Iowa Code Chapter 232. Guardianship is a safe alternative to adoption, providing permanency for the youth without requiring formal termination of parental rights.

“Targeted Recruitment” means strategic recruitment activities designed to attract prospective or currently licensed Resource Families who can provide stable, safe, and nurturing homes to Children in need of Foster and/or adoptive care. Targeted Recruitment is built from an analysis of the demographics and characteristics of the Children in Placement, and an analysis of the demographics and characteristics of families in a particular region.

“Youth Centered Meeting (YCM)” means a transition-planning meeting held for youth age 14 or older who are in out-of-home Placement. The purpose of the meeting is to assist the youth in the development of a plan that provides a smooth transition from out-of-home care into the community. The meeting is youth-driven, where youth have a voice in identifying team members, personalized goals, and the supports/resources needed for them to be successful.

“Youth Centered Planning Meeting (YCPM)” means the JCS model for a formal transition/reentry planning meeting that is youth driven and co-led by the youth and a JCS approved YCPM facilitator. The meeting model and its components, which address eight transition domains, has been developed specifically to address the needs of youth ages 14-18 involved in the juvenile justice system.

“Youth Transition Decision-Making (YTDM) Meeting” means a Youth-centered practice model and teaming approach that follows standards and is offered to Youth 16 years of age and older. This model has two key components: Engagement/Stabilization and the Dream Path process to promote self-sufficiency and to empower Youth to take control of their lives and dreams. Supportive adults and peers create a team to help the Youth make connections to resources, education, employment, health care, housing and supportive personal and community relationships.

1.3 Scope of Work.

1.3.1 Statewide Coverage

In order to encourage the movement of Children back to their communities of origin (where feasible) to preserve connections of youth to their families, home communities, schools, spiritual connections, and community-based supports, as well as achieve better outcomes for Resource Families, the Contractor shall:

- a) Ensure services are available in all Iowa Counties.
- b) Seamlessly transition services for youth who move from one community to another.
- c) Achieve better outcomes for Resource Families.

1.3.2 Collaboration and Consultation

In order to achieve the desired outcomes of safety, Permanency, and well-being for Children, the Contractor shall collaborate with the Agency, Juvenile Court Services, other Child Welfare service contractors, and stakeholders. Strong collaboration will strengthen services, identify gaps or needs, promote best practice, and avoid service duplication. The Contractor shall collaborate by working and participating in local, Service Area, and statewide committees, workgroups, and planning groups. The Contractor shall collaborate with entities such as, but not limited to, the following:

- a) Any contractor performing the services listed in this Scope of Work
- b) Safety Plan and Family Centered Services FCS contractors
- c) Crisis Intervention, Stabilization, and Reunification Services (CISR) contractors
- d) State and local initiatives such as the Breakthrough Series Collaborative and Minority, Youth, and Family Initiatives
- e) Achieving Maximum Potential (AMP) and After Care Contractor
- f) Parent Partners
- g) Providers of mental health and substance abuse services, and

- h) Churches and faith-based community organizations
- i) Five Points Technology Group

1.3.3 Specialized Caseworker Model

The Contractor shall use a Specialized Caseworker Model which positions the Contractor to select and train staff to roles that meet the individual's interest and ability, and allows staff to be accessible, specially trained, and dedicated where they are needed the most—working directly with the family. The Specialized Caseworker Model will have four distinct program components:

- a) Recruitment and Retention, Inquiry, and Training
- b) Licensing
- c) Support
- d) Centralized Statewide Matching

The Agency understands there may be challenges and limitations in rural areas to have dedicated staff for each distinct program component. At a minimum, under this model, the Contractor shall ensure that the families served have a Caseworker available and responsive to them and not distracted with other deadlines.

Caseworkers shall maintain familiarity with each Resource Family's history of fostering and know the needs, ages, and behaviors of Children with which they have had success. Caseworkers shall understand each family's current situations and judge their ability to parent another Child given their immediate circumstances.

1.3.4 Recruitment and Retention

The Contractor shall have a sufficient pool of Resource Families available to meet the behavioral, emotional, medical, educational, developmental, spiritual, and cultural needs of Children who need out-of-home care. In order to maintain this sufficient pool of Resource Families and meet Children's needs, the Contractor shall enact and operate effective recruitment and retention programs.

Effective care of Children necessitates a pool of Resource Families diverse in geographic location, training, capacity, strengths, ability, skills, race, religion, and ethnicity. To ensure the best possible match between a Resource Family and a Child, and not just an available match, a Contractor shall have a large and diverse enough pool of Resource Families to ensure a Child in need of out-of-home care is matched to a Resource Family that is best able to meet the Child's needs. Contractor shall ensure the following: A sufficient number of Resource Families who are ready, able and willing to accept a Child who is matched into their home including specified targeted populations of children such as teens, sibling groups, non-white Children, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning (LGBTQ) youth, delinquent youth, and Children with medical, behavioral, and mental health needs. Capacity shall be determined by the number of Resource Families who are Available for Matching, not by the number of licensed families who are either licensed for a specific Child, who are only available to provide respite, or who have not been willing to have a Child placed in their home for one calendar year. This includes, but is not limited to, Resource Families that will reflect the following:

- a) The race, ethnicity, and culture of Children in our State. The Contractor shall ensure the provision of effective, equitable, understandable, and respectful supports and services that are responsive to diverse cultural beliefs and practices, preferred languages, health literacy, and other communication needs. This shall be measured utilizing the Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Service Standards adopted by the Agency (Attachment H).
- b) Honor, respect, and work to develop, enhance, and maintain a foster Child's connections to their parents and extended family by mentoring birth parents and supporting ongoing contact between the Child and the Child's family including attending Solution Focused Meetings (SFM) or Youth Transition Decision-Making (YTDM) meetings, Youth Centered Meetings (YCM), Youth Centered Planning Meetings (YCPM), and meeting at the request of the Child's family.
- c) Maintain sibling connections when siblings are in separate Placement settings.
- d) Collaborate with service providers working with the family.

- e) Flexible and available to take Children in care to medical appointments, therapy appointments, and visitation with parents and family whenever possible.
- f) Keep Children in their home schools and close to their family and community.
- g) Have the capacity, strengths, ability, and skills to parent:
 - i. Teens
 - ii. Sibling groups, especially sibling groups of three or more
 - iii. Children who express trauma through behaviors
 - iv. Children who have extensive behavioral issues
 - v. Children who have experienced significant grief and loss
 - vi. Youth involved in the Juvenile Justice system (delinquent behaviors)
 - vii. Children who have extensive medical needs or developmental delays
 - viii. Children who have numerous medical or therapeutic appointments
 - ix. Children who have frequent family visits, and
 - x. Children who are LGBTQ

1.3.4.1 Characteristics and Capabilities of Selected Families

Resource Families shall not simply be available and willing to participate in the program but actively engaged and eager to help Children. Resource Families shall, at minimum, have the following characteristics and capabilities:

- a) Strong desire to protect, support, and encourage Children.
- b) Ability to unconditionally accept Children's emotional needs upon Placement.
- c) Ability, experience, and skills to effectively raise and care for Children.
- d) Willingness to work with Children's birth families including frequent family visits, including when this will lead to Placement of the Child with a member of their birth family.
- e) Ability to support a Child's education, spiritual, health, and development of life skills.
- f) Desire to support innovation and continued change and improvement.

1.3.4.2 Recruitment and Retention Plans

In order to create and maintain a sufficient pool of Resource Families, the Contractor shall develop, implement and collaborate with each individual Service Area and adhere to all specific recruitment and retention plans for Resource Families to ensure appropriate capacity and coverage for all counties in each Service Area.

The Contractor's work plans, and recruitment and retention plans shall require Service Area Manager (SAM) and Contract Manager review and approval at their inception and during any amendments or changes. The Contractor shall create a standardize plan template that will receive final approval from the Agency. Plans shall be provided to the Contract Manager and Service Area Manager no later than September 30th and annually 30 days after receiving baseline data following the initial year.

1.3.4.2.1 Recruitment Plans

Annually, the Contractor shall develop, implement, and adhere to Agency-Approved recruitment plans that shall:

- a) Be an individual plan specific to each Service Area, addressing the five individual Service Area's specific needs, populations, geography, and other characteristics.
- b) Be developed to specifically recruit families eager to participate in the program, help Children, and meet Agency goals.
- c) Be developed in collaboration with the Agency Service Area leadership to include input from Resource Families, CISR providers, FCS providers, and others as determined by the team.
- d) Be based on Service Area data that incorporates, but is not limited to:
 - i. Overall capacity of Resource Families Available for Matching

- ii. Targeted populations such as teens, sibling groups, non-white Children, LGBTQ youth, delinquent youth, and Children with medical, behavioral, and mental health needs
 - iii. Removal and Placement trends in order to identify and prepare for peak referral times during the year
 - iv. Geographic locations of Resource Families to keep Children in their home schools and close to their family and community, and
 - v. Other data determined to be relevant in the Service Area.
- e) Be based on recruitment strategies that have evidence of success, including:
 - i. Balancing general media or mass marketing with person-to-person activities
 - ii. Engaging successful Resource Families in promoting Foster Care to a wider audience, through use of larger scale media or General Recruitment activities
 - iii. Having a consistent level of activities both general and localized across the Service Area, and
 - iv. Using panels consisting of Resource Families, youth in care, and youth looking for a permanent home to present in community outreach efforts.
 - f) Incorporate Child-specific Targeted Recruitment capabilities (example, medically fragile Child).
 - g) Include strategies for the recruitment of a Resource Family for a specific Child in need of a permanent home through adoption.
 - h) Provide strategies to build connections with Children who need an Adoptive Family.
 - i) Engage a network of strong local leaders, including business leaders, faith leaders, and community leaders to disseminate information within their communities.
 - j) Incorporate quarterly reviews of data and strategies to determine success.
 - k) Include recruitment bonuses, in an amount approved by the Agency, to Foster Families who recruit another family that becomes licensed for general matching.
 - l) Collaborate on recruitment activities with other agencies and projects, such as AdoptUsKids, and Wendy's Wonderful Kids.
 - m) Include the development of partnership with faith-based organizations in all parts of the State.
 - n) Consider and include strategies for future innovation and continued improvement throughout the recruitment process.
 - o) Include a collaboration process with CISR contractors, PMIC facilities, the State Training School and the Agency to identify Children who wish to transition to the care of a positive, supporting adult already present in their life. This positive, supporting adult must be willing to pursue licensure or accept custody of the Child and be able to teach and cultivate individual life skills. The Contractor shall facilitate the transition for the Child and guide the positive, supporting adult through the licensure process.
 - p) Require Agency review and approval at the plan's inception and during any amendments or changes.

1.3.4.2.2 Retention Plans

Annually, the contractor shall develop, implement and adhere to, Agency approved retention plans shall be developed to retain the strongest Resource Families who have shown their eagerness to participate in the program, help Children, and meet Agency goals. Activities include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

- a) Be Service Area specific, addressing the Service Area's specific needs, populations, geography, and other characteristics.
- b) Include the organization of community events in collaboration with Agency staff.
- c) Organize "meet and greet" events where Resource Families and Agency staff can meet each other at a frequency determined by the Agency.

- d) Implement and maintain an Advisory Group, that includes Resource Families, the Agency, and the Contractor, to jointly address concerns or issues the involve Resource Families.
- e) Develop and maintain a structure of mentoring by pairing experienced Resource Families with newly licensed/approved Resource Families.
- f) Focus on increasing the capacity of Resource Families Available for Matching.
- g) Collaborate on retention activities with other agencies and projects, such as AdoptUsKids, and Wendy's Wonderful Kids.
- h) Consider and include strategies for future innovation and continued improvement in retaining as many stable and capable Resource Families as possible.

1.3.4.3 Recruitment of Kinship Caregivers

The Contractor shall connect Kinship Caregivers to the formal licensed foster care process. When a Child becomes eligible for the Kinship Caregiver payment, DHS will make a referral to RRTS. This referral date shall be the inquiry date in the Agency online system.

- a) Upon receiving the Child Welfare Services Referral Face Sheet - 470-5150 the Contractor shall contact the Kinship Caregiver by phone within five business days to schedule an informational face-to-face meeting or video call. The Contractor shall complete the informational meeting within 15 days of referral.
- b) The Contractor shall discuss the following with the Kinship Caregiver:
 - i. Overview of foster care licensing process that includes the process and sequence of events to become a Resource Family
 - ii. Child abuse, criminal history, and sexual offender record checks
 - iii. Possible pre-service training requirements
 - iv. Timeframes
 - v. References
 - vi. The elements of a home study
 - vii. The role of the Contractor
 - viii. Benefits and supports of becoming licensed:
 - a. Respite
 - b. Childcare assistance
 - c. Increased monthly financial support
 - d. Resource Families will receive supervision and guidance for Children placed in their home.
- c) The Contractor shall schedule the Kinship Caregiver for an orientation beginning the formal foster care licensure process once the Kinship Caregiver commits to licensing process.
- d) The Contractor shall follow up with the Kinship Caregiver within thirty calendar days from the day the Kinship Caregiver expresses they are not interested in becoming a Resource Family. The Contractor shall re-evaluate with the Kinship Caregiver their desire to become licensed.
- e) The Contractor shall coordinate with the Kinship Specialist in the transition from the Kinship Navigator Program to the formal licensing process.

1.3.5 Inquiry

The Contractor shall respond to all inquiries from potential kinship or foster caregivers requesting information regarding how they can become a Resource Family. This includes, but is not limited to, information about the steps to becoming a Foster Parent; information about adopting a Child publicly or privately; supports and services available for the Kinship Caregiver or Resource Family, including financial; services and orientating classes offered; and the licensing process.

The Contractor shall be accessible to meet the needs of those seeking more information by providing accessibility, including but not limited to:

1. A toll-free information telephone line, with voicemail capability
2. Email

3. Website with a “contact us” option

Inquiries shall be able to be submitted 24 hours a day and seven days a week. Inquiries shall be responded to within one Business Day. The Contractor shall maintain a record of all inquiries in the Agency online system, including the date and time of inquiry, the date and time of response, and the category of inquiry.

1.3.6 Training

The Contractor shall provide orientation to introduce prospective Resource Families to Foster Care and adoption, pre-service training to prepare Resource Families and to complete initial licensure or adoption approval, and in-service training to help Resource Families continually improve their ability to nurture and support a Child’s needs while in care and to meet foster home licensing requirements. The Contractor shall ensure training is developed and delivered in alignment with policies intended to keep every Child safe from abuse. All training curricula shall be approved by the Agency and shall meet the following requirements:

- a. Available across the State to allow equitable access to all Foster Families.
- b. Available to unlicensed kin and Fictive Kin caregivers and Adoptive Families, as well as Resource Families.
- c. Updated to align with practice or policy changes.
- d. Incorporate the voice and experience of Resource Families and youth with lived experience in Iowa’s foster care system.
- e. Utilize multimedia training techniques including but not limited to Webinars, videos, and web-based training.
- f. Refrain from charging any fees or collecting any sums from Resource Families in relation to work performed pursuant to training. The Contractor shall not charge trainees for attending any regular area trainings.
- g. In person and virtual options shall be offered, as approved by the Agency.
- h. Provide trainings that align with and support the Agency's goals for the safety, Permanency, and well-being of Children placed in a Foster Family Home.
- i. Training shall include, but not be limited to, discussion on the following topics:
 - i. Ensuring the safety, Permanency, and well-being of each Child
 - ii. Helping the Child to return to the Child’s family of origin or other family placement
 - iii. The value and the Resource Parent’s role in Family Interaction
 - iv. Connecting to, engaging with, and supporting services for the Child and family

1.3.6.1 Orientation

The Contractor shall provide in-person or virtual orientation sessions for prospective Resource Families that include, but are not limited to, information, training, and resources regarding the process of licensing/approval, the Children who need out-of-home care, the importance of Family Interaction and working with birth parents, and the need to keep Children connected to family, friends, and communities.

The Contractor shall do all of the following:

- a. Provide prospective Resource Families information on the policies and procedures of the Foster Care and Adoption programs and include the following:
 - i. Processes and procedures for Placement and termination of Placement:
 - ii. Medical assistance program information
 - iii. Foster Family reimbursement information Subsidized Guardianship, and adoption subsidy information if applicable
 - iv. Child abuse law and child abuse investigation procedures; and
 - v. Necessary confidentiality procedures and standards
- b. Explain the Kinship Caregiver Program, as appropriate
- c. Explain the process of foster home licensing and adoption approval
- d. Discuss importance of reunification of the foster Child with the Child’s family of origin, and working with birth families
- e. Discuss the unique challenges and circumstances of Kin/Fictive Kin placements and licensure

- f. Explain the difference and unconditional nature of Foster Care, guardianship, and adoption
- g. Explain special needs adoption and provide information about Children waiting for adoption
- h. Counsel out families who do not support the mission of the Agency, who are unwilling to support reunification, or who do not have the skills, abilities, or desire to care for special needs Children early in the process.

1.3.6.2 Pre-Service Training

The Contractor shall provide training for prospective Resource Family applicants in accordance with the Agency's current foster home licensing, adoption approval, and pre-service training standards. Pre-service training shall be done in a way that allows for mutual selection of families to proceed through the licensing/approval process. Specifically, the Contractor shall:

- a. Train all prospective Resource Families, including kin and Fictive Kin, using a nationally established curriculum that is 30 hours in length and approved by the Agency.
- b. Use specific strategies, for example utilizing virtual methods approved by the Agency, to provide pre-service training for families in rural areas.
- c. Provide training at sufficient frequency so families are able to begin training within 60 days of completing orientation at a location within 60 miles of the family's home.
- d. Prior to licensure, the Contractor shall directly provide training to prospective Resource Families, or provide linkages to established training on:
 - i. Universal Precautions
 - ii. Medication Management
 - iii. Reasonable and prudent parent standard training
 - iv. Mandatory Reporter of Child Abuse training
 - v. First Aid and CPR
 - (1) The Contractor may charge a fee of no more than \$40 per person to directly provide First Aid and CPR training.
 - vi. "The Human Need for Belonging" by Amelia Franck Meyer
- e. Notify the Agency when Resource Families withdraw from the licensing process.
- f. Ensure throughout pre-service training that families are not disengaged but actively participating in the program, eager to help Children, and willing to meet Agency goals.

1.3.6.3 In-Service Training

The Contractor shall provide in-service trainings for Resource Families on relevant topics and administer Agency-approved trainings consistently throughout the year, at no cost to the family. The Contractor shall provide and/or connect Resource Families to trainings at a frequency so that licensed Foster Families can receive their required six hours of in-service training each year. The Contractor's duties in respect to training include, but are not limited to, the specific duties outlined below. The Contractor shall:

- a. Provide and connect Resource Families to trainings that align with and support the Agency's goals for the safety, Permanency, and well-being of Children placed in a Foster Family Home.
 - i. Use specific strategies to provide in-service training for families in rural areas.
- b. Develop and provide in-service trainings designed to increase the knowledge and skill level of Resource Families. The Contractor shall provide trainings that meet the following goals:
 - i. Teaching Resource Families behavioral strategies related to helping Children work through trauma, grief and loss, and attachment disruption
 - ii. Focus on strategies to work with birth parents
 - iii. Providing critical information about Child development
 - iv. Informing and instructing Resource Families in LGBTQ affirming parenting
 - v. Provide parenting strategies to affect a sense of normalcy for Children
 - vi. Preparing Resource Families for mentoring the Child's parents in their parenting of their Children to support reunification

- vii. Helping Resource Families understand behavioral and mental health services the child may be receiving, including the medications the Child is taking, dosing, precautions, and side effects
- viii. Providing parenting strategies to be able to work with the behavioral and mental health needs as well as the emotionally expressed behaviors of the foster Child in addition to helping maintain Placement Stability.
- ix. Providing Resource Families with an understanding of mental health diagnoses in infancy, childhood, or adolescence for example, ADHD, PTSD and other anxiety disorders.
- x. Meets or exceeds national standards, as approved by the Agency.
- xi. Develop an Adoption specific training preparing Resource Families for the transition from temporary placement to permanent Adoption.
- xii. Helping Resource Families understand the unique needs of youth who are involved in the Juvenile Justice System.

The Contractor may charge a fee of no more than \$40 per person to directly provide First Aid and CPR training.

Provide one \$100 training stipend to each Foster Family per foster home license year on or after the date that the initial license is issued to each Foster Family. For a two-year Foster Family Home license, the second year's \$100 stipend shall be provided to the Foster Family after completion of each foster parent's six hours of in-service training in the first year of the two-year license cycle.

1.3.7 Foster Home Licensing and Adoptive Home Approval

Part of the Contractor's responsibility in recruiting and retaining Resource Families is to ensure the Foster Families complete the initial licensure and re-licensure requirements, and adoptive homes complete the approval requirements. Throughout this section, the term "licensure" applies to Foster Families and the term "approval" to adoptive homes. To ensure timely and sufficient licensing and approval, the Contractor shall conduct activities including record checking, home studies and initial licensing, and renewal home studies and relicensing. In all of these processes, the Contractor shall conduct thorough Quality Assurance activities to ensure appropriate standards are met. Throughout the initial licensure, re-licensure, and initial approval processes the Contractor shall ensure appropriate staff are assigned to families to guide them through the process in a timely and supportive fashion.

1.3.7.1 Licensing, Approval and Renewal Packets

The Contractor shall provide the completed Resource Family initial home studies described in Section 1.3.7.2 and Renewal home studies described in Section 1.3.7.3 and other licensing and approval information, including record and background checks as described in Section 1.3.7.4, to the Agency in an Agency approved Packet. The Contractor shall:

- a. Track the dates Packets are due.
- b. Perform a review to ensure completeness of each Foster Care/adoption initial and Renewal Packet before submitting the Packet to the Agency based on the approved Agency Check Lists.
- c. Track the date of notification by the Agency of missing items and forms from the Agency approved checklist, what the missing items are, and the date the Packet was received.
- d. Ensure the Agency receives Initial Packets within 100 days of the date the applicant began pre-service training, or 90 days of the date the waiver of pre-service training is received by the Contractor from the Agency.
- e. Ensure the Agency receives the complete Renewal Packets within 60 days of expiration of the license or approval
- f. Inform the Agency and submit the withdrawal verification when a Resource Family withdraws from the licensing process that contains all known information about the family and details of the circumstances of the withdrawal within 30 days of the applicant signing the withdrawal form.

- g. Ensure the timeliness of each Packet, which will be evaluated by the Agency on a quarterly basis. Failing to meet these standards 90% of the time may result in a Corrective Action Plan per Section 1.3.15.4.

1.3.7.2 Initial Home Studies

The Contractor shall complete Resource Family initial home studies and document the process with a written report containing an assessment of the family's ability to provide Foster Care and/or to adopt. The Contractor shall provide a licensing or approval recommendation in compliance with Iowa Administrative Code. In order to ensure a Resource Family is appropriate to be licensed or approved and to ensure the required information is included such that an informed decision regarding approval can be made, complete studies shall be submitted to the Agency as stated in Section 1.3.7.1. The Contractor shall include the completed studies in the Agency approved Licensing and Approval Packet as described in Section 1.3.7.1. Specifically, the Contractor shall:

- a. Complete the written home study for Foster and Adoptive Family applicants using the Agency approved Home Study format, Form 470-5436 Attachment N. The written home study shall reflect Agency approved pre-service principles, meet licensing and approval requirements outlined in Iowa Administrative Code 441-108, Licensing and Regulation of Child-Placing Agencies, Iowa Administrative Code 441-113 Licensing and Regulation of Foster Family Homes, and Iowa Administrative Code 441-200 Adoption Services. Describe evidence-based practices and assessment tools utilized.
- b. Conduct a minimum of three (3) visits as part of the initial home study process and shall document these visits in the home study format. Two of these visits shall be in-home, one will be unannounced, and one visit may be done outside the home.
- c. Perform Quality Assurance reviews to ensure that home studies comply with Iowa Administrative Code 441-108, Licensing and Regulation of Child Placing Agencies, and Iowa Administrative Code 441-113 Licensing and Regulation of Foster Family Homes, and Iowa Administrative Code 441-200 Adoption Services and include your outcomes in your Annual Report
- d. Ensure all designated staff providing these services are sufficiently trained and supervised and meet relevant Iowa Administrative Code Chapter 108 requirements.

1.3.7.3 Renewal Home Studies

The Contractor shall complete Resource Family renewal home studies as an update to documentation of the family's compliance with Iowa Administrative Code required for license or approval renewal. In order to ensure a family is fully licensed or approved with no gaps in renewal periods, and to fully review information regarding changes in the home, Placement experiences, strengths and concerns, complete renewal Packets as described in Section 1.3.7.1 shall be submitted to the Agency within 60 days of expiration of the license or approval. Specifically, the Contractor shall:

- a. Complete the renewal process for foster parent applicants and adoptive parent applicants as required by Iowa Administrative Code 441-108, Iowa Administrative Code 441-113, and Iowa Administrative Code 441-200.
- b. Develop an annual training plan in collaboration with the Resource Family based on the skills, strengths, and needs of the family. The plan shall be reviewed monthly and revised as needed during the licensing or approval year. The plan shall be included in the renewal Packet.
- c. Conduct unannounced licensing or approval visits annually between day 90 and day 210 of each licensed year in accordance with Iowa Administrative Code 441-108 and Iowa Administrative Code 441-113. Unannounced visits shall not be completed in conjunction with foster home licensing renewals or adoption approval updates.
- d. Include documentation of contacts and visits to the Resource Family home in the renewal home study. Findings and observations of the visit shall be documented and provided to the Agency when the update is submitted.
- e. Ensure the renewal home studies use the Agency approved Home Study format, Form 470-5436 Attachment N and shall:

- i. Review in-service trainings completed by the Resource Family and describe how they are implementing the skills learned based upon the training
- ii. Document concerns that were identified since the last update and how those concerns were addressed
- iii. Ensure conversations regarding recommendations occur between the Contractor and Agency in order to align prior to renewal home study submittal.
- iv. Document successes and challenges of Children placed in each home.

1.3.7.4 Record and Background Checks

The Contractor shall conduct record and background checks in accordance with state and federal policy and include them in the Agency approved Licensing, Approval and Renewal Packet from Section 1.3.7.1. The Contractor shall conduct record and background checks in accordance with state and federal policy for a successor guardian named in and Agency Subsidized Guardianship agreement. The Contractor shall have a secure location for the storage of these results. These record and background checks shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. Background checks required by Iowa Code, the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (PL 109-248) and the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Reauthorization Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-320).
- b. Iowa criminal, Child and dependent adult abuse, and sex offender registry checks prior to a prospective Foster and/or Adoptive Family's enrollment in the Agency's approved training for each adult and Child aged 14 years and older residing in the home.
- c. Fingerprint-based checks of the National Crime Information Database for each adult applicant. The Contractor shall conduct fingerprint-based checks of any other adults residing in the home of the prospective Resource Family home for initial applications.
- d. Out-of-state Child and dependent adult abuse checks for all prospective foster and/or adoptive parents and any other adult living in the home in any state where the person lived during the previous five years.

1.3.7.5 Additional Updates

In addition to performing annual renewals/updates, the Contractor shall complete an update of the home study and licensing/adoption approval materials when an event occurs that alters the original study. Such events include, but are not limited to:

- a. Move to a new home
- b. Adoption of Children
- c. Structural changes to the home (i.e., Room, egress window additions, or swimming pool)
- d. Addition of other household members

The Contractor shall complete record checks on all new household members that have resided in the home over 30 days (excluding foster Children) age 14 and older.

1.3.7.6 Relative Home Studies

The Contractor shall complete Relative Home Studies for families referred by the Agency, following an Agency approved template. Specifically, the Contractor shall:

- a. Complete relative studies referred by the Agency using the Agency approved template.
- b. Complete Relative Home Studies within twenty (20) Business Days of receipt of the referral from the Agency, and completion of record checks and evaluations by the Agency.
- c. Provide relatives with information regarding the option to become a licensed Foster Family Home.

1.3.7.7 ICPC Licensed Foster Family and Adoptive Home Studies

The Contractor shall complete ICPC (Interstate Compact for Placement of Children) referrals for licensed Foster Family and adoptive care including foster and adoptive home study requests using the Agency approved template and within all required timeframes. Specifically, the Contractor shall:

- a. Complete both an initial and final home study that includes a written summary and recommendation.
- b. Complete all licensing and adoptive approval activities and compile all foster and adoptive documents in accordance with the Agency approved template.
- c. Complete an initial home study within sixty (60) calendar days of the Contractor receiving the referral in accordance with the federal requirement.
- d. Submit the completed Foster Family or Adoptive Family home study to the Agency.

1.3.7.8 ICPC Relative Home Studies

The Contractor shall complete ICPC referrals for unlicensed relatives including unlicensed Relative Home Studies using the Agency approved template and within all required timeframes. Specifically, the Contractor shall:

- a. Complete a home study that includes a written summary and recommendation.
- b. Complete all activities and compile all documents in accordance with the Agency approved template.
- c. Submit the completed home study within sixty (60) calendar days of the Contractor receiving the completed referral Packet from the Agency.

1.3.8 Matching

The Contractor shall have a sufficient pool of Resource Families so Children that are placed into care are matched to a family that has the skills, training, and ability to meet their needs in order to ensure Children achieve safety, Stability, and are protected from abuse. To improve Placement Stability for Children, the Contractor shall recommend Resource Families that are the best possible match for the Child and not just an available Resource Family.

The Contractor shall develop a Centralized Statewide Matching System which emphasizes clear communication with the Agency. The Contractor shall leverage the Caseworker's familiarity with their Resource Families' history of fostering, past successes, current situations, and immediate circumstances to suggest better Placement matches. The Resource Family's Caseworker shall work with Contractor matching staff to match the best home to each Child.

The Contractor shall:

- a) Develop, implement, and operationalize a Centralized Statewide Matching System with a single point of referral statewide.
- b) Develop, implement, and maintain a matching referral system available 24 hours a day seven days a week, including holidays.
- c) Accept any referral from the Agency or from Juvenile Court Services for a Child in need of a Foster Family Home.
- d) Have a process for working across all Service Areas to coordinate matching outside the Child's Service Area when needed.
- e) Develop a communication structure for updates to Agency or Juvenile Court Services placing staff on progress/barriers to finding a home based on the urgency of the Placement need.
- f) Establish, implement, and maintain a structured communication process for sharing information about Foster and Adoptive Families between the Contractor's Caseworkers and the Contractor's matching personnel with the goal of enhancing the matching process.
- g) Assist as requested by the Agency in matching approved Adoptive Families to Children in need of a permanent family.
- h) Coordinate with all out of home care providers in discharge planning for Children coming out of congregate care to plan for Placement in a Resource Family home.

- i) Ensure timeframes to complete a match are met, subject to Agency approval. The Agency will determine timeframes within a range of two hours to 45 days, on a Child-by-Child basis.
- j) Assess the ability of the Resource Family, including skill level and resources, when making a match, with careful consideration of the sometimes significant physical, social, behavioral, and/or mental health or disability needs of the Child
- k) Categorize Resource Family homes as Relative/Fictive Kin, respite only, licensed for a specific Child, or on hold when determining capacity.
- l) Use creative mechanisms other than phone calls to reach Resource Families, including emails, and texting without compromising confidentiality.
- m) Maintain real time information in the Agency's online system about the capacity and availability of Resource Families as well as communicating with the Agency about real time information for Children coming into care.
- n) Build relationships with congregate care providers to allow potential Resource Families to meet Children.
- o) Provide assistance in finding Adoptive Families for Children who enter Foster Care through the Safe Haven law.
- p) Provide assistance in finding Adoptive Families when a Child's Foster Family is not adopting but the Child is stable in the foster home. Strategies include:
 - i. Participation in Agency Concurrent Planning staffing's
 - ii. Partnering with Agency adoption staff
 - iii. Coordination with Wendy's Wonderful Kids
 - iv. Providing home studies of potential families to Agency for selection, and
 - v. Coordination and input from post-adoption support staff.

1.3.8.1 Placement Criteria

The Contractor shall identify one or more Resource Family homes that have been matched to a Child when a referral is received from the Agency or Juvenile Court Services. Contractor shall work to best match a home to a Child using Placement criteria that may be based on, but not limited to, the following considerations:

- a) Keep Children close to their parents, family members, and school.
- b) Keep siblings together - Siblings who cannot be placed together shall be in close proximity to each other. The Contractor shall collaborate with the Agency or Juvenile Court Services and any other service provider to develop a plan for the siblings to maintain contact with each other.
- c) Seek and incorporate input and advise parent or Child, when appropriate, regarding the best match and Placement for a Child.
- d) Ensure the Resource Family has the strengths and skills required to meet the specific needs of a Child including mental health, behavioral health or physical health needs.
- e) Ensure the needs of Children currently in the Resource Family home will be considered when matching another Child with the Resource Family. Contact Agency workers who have Children in the resource home for input before matching another Child for non-emergency referrals.
- f) Consider the desires of the Child when making a Match.
- g) Request and facilitate hard to place staffing's with the Agency and or JCS any other appropriate professionals in order to meet contractual matching timelines.
- h) Evaluate each match to determine if it was successful and report findings to the Agency.

A successful match first and foremost is a match that optimizes the overall safety, Permanency, and well-being of a Child. Though following the Placement criteria listed above will help lead to matches that meet these goals, it is ultimately the responsibility of the Contractor to communicate with the Agency, Resource Families, and Children to make a successful match.

Iowa DHS seeks to add Therapeutic Foster Care to the continuum of services offered in Iowa. The Contractor shall be required to contribute to the planning, designing, developing and implementation of the project. The overarching goal of this service is to reduce the number of youth placed in restrictive facilities,

provide step-down options for youth transitioning from more intensive facilities, and to provide alternative placements for youth who have been unsuccessful in traditional foster homes or group settings. The Contractor shall have ongoing responsibilities that shall be determined as part of the planning, designing, development, and implementation of the therapeutic Foster Care program.

1.3.9 Support

The Contractor shall provide support to Resource Families which leads to better outcomes for Children and Resource Families, including ensuring every Child is safe from abuse. Effective support will include staying connected, through phone, email and regular face to face visits with Resource Families throughout a Child's placement. Individualized plans for the Child and for training to the Resource Families are among the organizational strategies intended to be family driven, specific, and facilitate beneficial supports for the Child(ren) and Resource Families. The Contractor shall have a firm grasp on what strategies are and are not working for the Resource Family and all Children in their care. The Contractor shall use this information to continually and proactively inform and improve the RRTS process, working to recruit families with successful characteristics, preemptively identify families in need, and increase the effectiveness of training.

The Specialized Caseworker Model ensures a single person will be available and responsive for each Resource Family, so they know support is there when there is a need for someone to assist with problem-solving, connect to additional resources, or to better understand the Child Welfare system. A single support Caseworker shall be the consistent point of contact for each Resource Family's concerns, questions, and other support needs.

The Contractor shall have an intentional and adaptive process to educate Resource Families about the supports available to them. Resource families will receive support from the Contractor when they are licensed or are kin/Fictive Kin on a path to licensure. Additionally, a family who adopts or assumes guardianship of a Child will receive support as well. Support is intended to be tailored to the needs and desires of the family and the Child and will be delivered in a method which appeals to the Resource Family.

The support process shall also be Service Area specific, addressing the Service Area's specific needs, populations, geography, and other characteristics.

The Contractor shall:

- a. Develop an individualized training plan with each Resource Family based on the skills, strengths, needs, and ages of Children placed in the home and the behaviors of Children placed in the home.
- b. Review the individualized training plan monthly with each Resource Family and clearly documented in the Agency approved progress note form 470-5438.

1.3.9.1 Foster Care and Pre-Adoption Support

The Contractor shall provide on-going, proactive support to all Resource Families that provide Foster Family Care and pre-adoption services to strengthen Placements, prevent disruptions, and support the achievement of Permanency goals for the Children in their care. For the Contractor, support shall include but not be limited to:

- a) Making contact at the following intervals to gather information about the Child, the Placement, and the family. Caseworkers shall discuss the Resource Family's successes, challenges, stressors, concerns, training needs, and any other relevant information to enhance the Family's ability to care for a Child in out-of-home Placement. Contact with Resource Families each month shall occur at the following intervals, with no greater than a 5% error rate:
 - i. Holding complete and purposeful face-to-face contact every month for a minimum of 45 minutes in length and phone contact each month for a minimum of 15 minutes in length with each licensed Resource Family and their assigned Caseworker when a Child is in the home. Virtual visitation can be utilized every other month and be counted towards the monthly face-to-face visit. The unannounced licensing visit shall count as one face-

- to-face visit. At least one face-to-face visit each quarter shall include some or all of the Children placed in the home to observe, coach, and mentor the Resource Family.
- ii. Holding complete and purposeful face-to-face contact on a bi-monthly basis for a minimum of 45 minutes in length and virtual or phone contact each month for a minimum of 15 minutes in length in between with each licensed Resource Family and their assigned support Caseworker when a Child is not in the home. This includes discussion of issues, training, and the barriers preventing the Resource Family being matched to a Child.
 - iii. Visiting each Resource Family home and having face-to-face contact with each Resource Family and their assigned Caseworker within five (5) calendar days of a Child being placed in the home. This visit may count as one of the required monthly face-to-face visits and shall be a minimum of 45 minutes in length.
 - iv. Holding complete and purposeful face-to-face contact with approved Resource Families on a bi-monthly basis for a minimum of 45 minutes in length. This session shall be used to discuss opportunities to take placement of Children and sibling groups currently available for adoption. During months with no face-to-face contact there will be a phone contact for a minimum of 15 minutes in length.
 - v. Participation in an “icebreaker” meeting led by DHS that will be held between birth parents and Foster Parents. This meeting will be focused on the Child and held shortly after a Child is placed in out-of-home care. This meeting should provide an opportunity for the Foster Family and the Child’s parents to meet each other and to share information about the needs of the Child. It serves as a starting point for establishing communication and building a relationship.
 - a. This icebreaker meeting should occur within five (5) calendar days of placement, when appropriate. (This meeting may count as the required five (5) – day calendar visit following placement if held in the Resource Family home)
 - b. The Contractor shall encourage ongoing meetings and communication between the birth family and Foster Family to maintain the relationship and keep the lines of communication open.
- b) Providing a well-documented narrative of the content of each face-to-face visit to the Agency or Juvenile Court placing worker and the Agency licensing worker uploaded to the Agency online system within five (5) Business Days after the contact.
 - c) Monitoring and discussing with Resource Families the reasons they have declined Children who fit within the Resource Families’ identified profile.
 - d) Identifying Resource Family needs and assisting the family in resolving those needs.
 - e) Attending SFM, YCM, YCPM and/or YTDM meetings at Agency or Child’s family’s request.
 - f) Developing a plan to support a Resource Family when there are violations of licensing rules, or a Corrective Action Plans (CAP) is needed.
 - g) Monitoring the Resource Family’s progress in completing the terms of the CAP.
 - h) Resolving conflicts with the Agency, service providers, birth families, or other members of the Child’s team.
 - i) Developing and adhering to a structured process such as Stability staffing’s or other meetings as needed to manage Stability, mitigate risk of disruption, and keep Children stable in their Resource Family homes. The Contractor shall have a strategic plan to avoid Placement disruptions whenever possible.
 - j) Communicating with all Agency/JCS staff who have Children placed in the Resource Family home to address any concerns related to the care of any Child in the home.
 - k) Developing a communication strategy for ongoing and frequent contact with Agency/JCS staff who have Children placed in the Resource Family home.

- l) Providing crisis response and assistance to Foster/Pre-Adoptive Families struggling with severe child behaviors or other urgent challenges caring for the children in their care. This may include engaging clinical or specialists inside the organization or referring the family to outside providers.
- m) Monitoring and reporting of Critical Incidents. Assisting the Resource Family to resolve any issues that came from the Critical Incident.
- n) Providing a contact list of respite care providers, including in-home respite care providers and/or assisting the Resource Families in contacting the respite care providers
- o) Assisting Resource Families with the transition of teens into adulthood.
- p) Discussing Children's involvement with the Iowa Foster Care Youth Council when the Child is of the appropriate age and a Foster Care Youth Council is geographically available.
- q) Assisting Resource Families who are caring for parenting youth in care.
- r) Assisting Resource Families with the transition of Children to Permanency through reunification.
- s) Partnering, coordinating, and collaborating with Agency Placement and adoption staff, and other members of the Child's team to strengthen the Placement and prevent disruptions.
- t) Providing services in a culturally competent manner.
- u) Connecting newly licensed or approved families with experienced Foster/Adoptive Families to act as mentors.
- v) Counseling out Resource families who cannot fulfill the mission of the Agency early in the process.
- w) Coordinating and collaborating with FCS and any other service providers to transition Foster Families from Foster Care to adoption.
- x) Providing information to Resource families regarding the adoption and Foster Care and guardianship.
- y) Providing training support and assisting in developing new support groups as needed.
- z) Ensuring Resource Families understand prescription medications that may be prescribed to Children in their care, including dosing, precautions, and side effects.
- aa) Collaborating with the Agency and other service providers in developing the plan for Children who are leaving higher levels of care, or who have experienced multiple moves to assist in matching these Children to Resource Families.
- bb) Developing and maintaining a website. The website shall, at a minimum, provide resource and contact information such as: Agency policy, training schedules, location of support groups, matching information, and newsletters.
- cc) Implement and maintain a toll-free crisis, telephone line for Resource Families. This phone line will be staffed by a professionally trained staff 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including holidays.

1.3.9.2 Post-Adoption Subsidized Guardianship Support

The contractor shall provide supportive services to adoption and Subsidized Guardianship families by offering individual and group supports and referrals to community-based resources when needed. Eligible families must have current adoption special needs, adoption future needs or Subsidized Guardianship agreements with the Agency. Supports are to prevent adoption and Subsidized Guardianship disruption and/or dissolution to families. The Contractor shall ensure post-adoption and Subsidized Guardianship support is easily and readily accessible. The Contractor shall also provide training, respite services, and limited financial supports to eligible families. The Contractor shall ensure post-adoption and Subsidized Guardianship support shall always promote the best outcomes for the Child and adoptive family.

The Contractor Shall:

- a) Establish relationships with eligible families including but not limited to the following:
 - i. Provide information about the existence of post-adoption Subsidized Guardianship support at the time permanency is established;
 - ii. Connect with the families by phone between 4 (four) and 6 (six) months after permanency is established to remind the caregivers that post-adoption and Subsidized Guardianship supports exist;

- iii. Provide information on the adoption support group;
 - iv. Ensure families are receiving the quarterly newsletter with articles, community-based resources, and information on how to contact the Contractor for post-adoption and Subsidized Guardianship support in the event the family needs additional resources or supports;
 - v. Have enrolled in Medicaid-funded services, such as having a primary care physician; and
 - vi. Remind the family about the website and contact number in the event services are needed in the future.
- b) Annually, the Contractor shall develop, implement, and adhere to an Agency approved outreach plan that shall include, but not be limited to;
- i. Information on the process for ensuring all adoptive parents and guardians are made aware of post-adoption and Subsidized Guardianship supports;
 - ii. Number of staff involved in providing outreach to eligible families, number of staff providing case management for families and average caseload;
 - iii. Number of support groups held the previous contract year, including the number of people who attended, number of newsletters sent, and the number of adoptive parents and guardians who were successfully reached on the phone within 4 (four) to 6 (six) months post-permanency. The contractor shall utilize a list of families eligible for post-adoption and Subsidized Guardianship support provided by the Agency. Documents attached to the plan, for Agency review and approval, shall contain the following at a minimum:
 - a. Written information provided to adoptive and subsidized guardianship families explaining the benefits of post adoption and Subsidized Guardianship services.
 - b. Written information provided to community referral entities outlining post-adoption and Subsidized Guardianship support programs. Community referral entities to be provided information include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Child Welfare system partner representatives
 - 2. Public and Private Schools/Educational Facilities
 - 3. Mental health facilities/clinics
 - 4. Hospitals and medical clinics
 - 5. Faith organizations
 - iv. The outreach plans shall be written and provided to the Agency within the first 30 days of each contract year for approval by the Agency.
- c) Develop, implement, and adhere to a centralized statewide referral and information system with electronic and phone access for referral, questions and problem solving. The referral system shall be accessible and able to accept referrals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- d) Referrals and requests for information for post-adoption and Subsidized Guardianship support services shall be received from any interested person involved with the post-adoption and Subsidized Guardianship family/youth. The Contractor shall provide initial responses shall be within two (2) business days of referral.
- e) Make contact with the referred family within two (2) business days after receipt of a referral. In the event the Contractor is unable to make contact due to the referred family being unavailable, the Contractor shall document at least three attempts to contact the family and the reason contact was not made. Secure and document the family's commitment or lack of willingness to participating in services. All documentation shall be completed in the Agency online system.
- f) Provide a resource packet to adoption and Subsidized Guardianship families who have accepted services. The packet contents shall describe local supports and services and shall include, minimally, the eligibility and how to access Medicaid and Waiver services for families needing mental health, emotional and behavioral support for Children in the home.
- g) Prior to the implementation of post-adoption or Subsidized Guardianship support services for a family, contact Agency or family and request a copy of the special needs, future needs or Subsidized Guardianship agreement to verify eligibility for support services. Agreement shall be part of the family case file record. Document if the family is eligible for services based on having an adoption subsidy (special needs and future needs) or Subsidized Guardianship agreement.

- h) Services available to post-adoption and Subsidized Guardianship families shall include but not be limited to:
- i. For families who choose to participate in case management services via post-adoption or Subsidized Guardianship support, an in-person meeting to transition services from ongoing RRTS foster care pre-adoptive support to post-adopt/Subsidized Guardianship support services shall occur. The goal of the meeting is to introduce the post adopt/guardianship staff to the family and ensure a smooth transition to services. Contractor shall document the family's willingness to participate in the Agency approved online system.
 - ii. If an adoption/Subsidized Guardianship family chooses not to engage in post-adoption/Subsidized Guardianship support services, family shall be made aware of the option to participate in offered support groups, trainings and community supports. The option to reach-out to the contractor in the future for referrals or post-adoption/Subsidized Guardianship support services shall be provided to families who choose not to participate.
 - iii. For the intensive case management service, the focus of home visits shall include some or all the following (a-h). Intensive Case management is anticipated to be up to six (6) home visits lasting at least 45 minutes over a 6-week period, per year/per child.
 - a. Behavior problem-solving
 - b. Service planning using the form described in section 1.3.9.2(h) below.
 - c. Verbal and written information about post-adoption and Subsidized Guardianship services
 - d. Verbal and written information about community services, including Medicaid, Waiver Services, food assistance, workforce opportunities, mental and behavioral health supports and other as needed by the family.
 - e. Stress management and problem solving.
 - f. Parenting skill development including trauma informed parenting techniques when appropriate.
 - g. Monitoring of safety in the home.
 - h. Providing information on the role of the schools in providing appropriate education and resources including as determined by a child's IEP.
- i) Develop, implement, and adhere to an Agency approved service plan for support to families. Minimally, the plan shall include:
- i. Services offered
 - ii. Services accepted
 - iii. Family and individual goals
 - iv. Action Steps of the service provider and family members
 - v. Timeline for completion
 - vi. Planned length of service
- j) Provide opportunities for adoption specific trainings for any family in the state who has adopted. This should include both public and private adoptions. Trainings offered are selected based on recommendations from the Agency and Families surveyed. At least one adoption specific training shall be offered each month of the contract year for the duration of the contract. Trainings may be in person or virtual and must be accessible by families across the state.
- k) Develop and maintain an Agency approved website presence, describing specific support offered by the Contractor as well as other supports, training, and services which may be of benefit to the adoptive or Subsidized Guardianship family. Update immediately when programs and services change.
- l) Plan, organize and facilitate no less than monthly support group meetings for all public and private adoptive and Subsidized Guardianship Families, including but not limited to, those receiving direct post-adoption or Subsidized Guardianship support services. Support groups shall be available in each

of the five Agency Service Areas. Support groups should include, but not be limited to, on-line formats.

- m) Administer a stability grant program. Inform, provide, and track grants up to \$100 per family each state fiscal year for eligible adoption and guardianship families to access specialized items or services for Children in their care. These funds shall be used for special items not paid for through the adoption or Subsidized Guardianship program such as weighed blankets, sensory items, equine and canine therapy or emergency items needed for crisis stabilization within the adoption or guardianship home.
- n) Interface with community agencies and supports with or on behalf of the family.

1.3.9.3 Adoption Respite Program Administration

The Adoption Respite program provides a temporary relief for Iowa adoptive parents of Children who are eligible for adoption subsidy. The Contractor shall administer the Adoption Respite program as agreed upon with the Agency, including but not limited to the following services:

- a) Provide assistance to subsidized Adoptive Families in Iowa by offering options for respite providers including possible Resource Families who would be interested in providing the respite care.
- b) Track up to 10 days of Adoption Respite for eligible Iowa Agency adoption homes each fiscal year (July 1 to June 30) at \$20 a day.
- c) Provide payment to the Adoption Respite provider with allocated funds after receipt of a signed Adoption Respite Invoice. The Contractor shall ensure both the Adoption Respite provider and the adoptive parent sign the Invoice before payment is issued.

1.3.9.4 Support in Finding Adoptive Families for Waiting Children

The Contractor shall support the Agency in finding Adoptive Families for waiting Children. Specifically, the Contractor shall:

- a) Register Children with adoption as a Permanency goal on the national exchange located on the AdoptUsKids website, www.adoptuskids.org, in accordance with the Agency's rules, Iowa Administrative Code 441-203.
- b) Provide waiting Adoptive Families with AdoptUsKids registration information and facilitate information sharing between Adoptive Families and the Agency's Placement workers.
- c) Maintain a toll-free telephone number that provides information and referral information to Adoptive Families regarding waiting Children.
- d) Update the exchange information within three (3) Business Days of receiving the information from the Agency.
- e) Implement an Agency approved mechanism to share Adoptive Family profile information with Agency adoption staff searching for an Adoptive Family for a Child.
- f) Provide yearly training and/informational session to Agency Placement Staff on how to access Adoption Exchange Information

1.3.10 Reports and Data

The Contractor shall provide the Agency with data, reports, and information to determine areas of strength and areas to improve in all aspects of RRTS services. Reports and data shall not only include directly quantifiable data but will also include active, meaningful reporting on communication with Resource Families throughout the provision of services. Reports shall also continually and proactively inform and improve the RRTS process, working to recruit families with successful characteristics, preemptively identify families in need, and increase the effectiveness of training and support

Reports shall be provided to the Service Area Manager (SAM), Service Contract Specialist and the Contract Manager. The Contractor shall use their established internal Quality Assurance and improvement system for preparing, submitting, and validating their data and reports to the Agency. Contractors shall use encrypted email

in any correspondence containing confidential information.

The Agency may request at any time, with appropriate notice, ad hoc reports and/or meetings with the Contractor. These reports and/or meetings may occur in person, over the phone, or electronically at the Agency's discretion.

1.3.10.1 Critical Incident Data and Reports

The Contractor shall utilize the Agency's online reporting system to report all Critical Incidents with Twenty-four (24) hours of occurrence. This doesn't replace the need for immediate notification for Critical Incidents to the Agency by the Contractor.

1.3.10.2 Placement Data and Reports

Every two weeks the Contractor shall submit a report that shall indicate names, age, sex, race/ethnicity, special needs, and criteria specified by the Agency for each Child for whom the Contractor has been unable to find a Resource Family within the required timeframes. The Contractor shall include a brief narrative explaining issues and possible solutions to find Placement.

1.3.10.3 Monthly Data and Reports

The Contractor shall submit monthly data and reports in an Agency approved formats. Specifically, these data and reports shall include the following:

1.3.10.3.1 Monthly Data

The Contractor shall submit monthly reports documenting data on current and prospective Foster and Adoptive Families in an Agency approved format. These reports shall be submitted by the 20th of the following month.

1.3.10.3.2 Monthly Contact Data

The Contractor shall submit monthly report documenting all Resource Families and contacts made by the Contractor in an Agency approved format. These reports shall be submitted by the 20th of the following month.

1.3.10.4 Monthly Post-Adoption Services Data and Reports

The Contractor shall provide detailed monthly reports to the Agency for Post-Adoption Services containing the following data by the 20th of the following month:

- a) Service Area and County Name
- b) Support Date
- c) Family Name
- d) Type of contact
- e) Duration of Contact
- f) Number of Children in the home served
- g) Service provided
- h) Detailed report documenting the total cost of the program for the year, month by month, and
- i) Other items as determined by the Agency

1.3.10.5 Quarterly Data Summaries and Reports

The Contractor shall submit quarterly data summaries and reports by the 20th of the month following the end of the quarter in an Agency approved format.

1.3.10.6 Annual Innovation and Improvement Report

The Contractor shall report in an Agency approved format on work done to advance innovative ideas and achieve improvements throughout all RRTS services. These reports shall identify strengths, successes and challenges and highlight work done by the Contractor to move toward the Agency's future goals and improve the Child Welfare system of care. See "Annual Innovation and

Improvement Report: 470-5654 under “Documents for RRTS” for an example of this documentation: <https://dhs.iowa.gov/child-welfare-systems/implementation-information>

1.3.10.7 Annual Staffing Report

The Contractor shall provide an annual staffing report in an Agency approved format by the 15th of the month following the end of the State fiscal year that includes at the minimum the following information:

- a) Organizational structure
- b) Staffing ratios
- c) Staff turnover
- d) Full-time equivalents (FTEs)
- e) Salaries and benefits, and
- f) Other items as determined by the Agency

1.3.10.8 Annual Combined Cost Report

Complete and submit an Agency-developed Combined Cost Report annually to the Bureau of Service Contract Support identified personnel within 90 days after the end of the Contractor’s fiscal year.

1.3.11 Staffing

The Contractor shall meet all staff qualifications as defined in Iowa Administrative Code 441-108, Licensing and Regulation of Child-Placing Agencies. In addition, the Contractor shall meet the following criteria and requirements related to staffing:

- a) Develop, implement, and adhere to an Agency approved plan for recruiting, training, and support of staff.
- b) Ensure staff shall have a strong desire to participate in the program, support, encourage, and help Children, and meet Agency goals.
- c) Ensure staff shall be trained in, and follow at all times, Family First Blueprint for Iowa’s Future Child Welfare System (Attachment L), the Cultural Equity Alliance Guiding Principles (Attachment H), and the DHS Child Welfare Model of Practice (Attachment O)
- d) Take all steps necessary to ensure implementation of the Specialized Caseworker Model to include Inquiry, Training and Recruitment and Retention; Licensing; Support; and Centralized Statewide Matching.
- e) Ensure Contractor staffing ratios are based upon geographic and population considerations
- f) Ensure each staff member serving in the Specialized Support Caseworker role shall serve no more than thirty (30) licensed Foster Families, Adoptive Families, Dually Licensed Families and Kin and Fictive Kin placements, at one time and shall have limited other duties.
- g) Ensure that staff member serving in the Post Adopt Specialized Caseworker role shall serve no more than thirty-five (35) Adoptive families and shall have limited other duties.
- h) Have staff fully dedicated to the Contract, including but not limited to, – full time supervisors, Caseworkers, trainers, and other staff;
- i) Implement policies to encourage staff retention.
- j) Train staff in the skills needed to assess a Resource Family’s in the following:
 - a. cultural responsiveness
 - b. adoption and subsidized guardianship
 - c. completion by all adoption/Subsidized Guardianship staff/supervisors of the National Adoption Competency Mental Health Training Initiative (NTI)
- k) Train staff and support ongoing training to maintain a workforce with an accurate understanding of the adoption subsidy, Subsidized Guardianship and supports available through subsidy.

The staffing positions listed below are required positions. The Contractor may also hire staff in other positions, as needed, to best provide RRTS services.

1.3.11.1 Program Director

The Contractor shall maintain a Program Director dedicated to services performed pursuant to this Contract to execute specific administrative duties as defined in the organization's by-laws and policy manual. The Program Director shall have a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Social Work, Mental Health Counseling, Family Therapy, Sociology, Psychology, related area of human services, business or public administration, and a minimum of two years of experience in a social services agency. A master's degree in any of these fields is preferred.

1.3.11.2 Supervisors

The Contractor shall maintain Supervisors who oversee the work of Caseworkers and Trainers as well as coordinate recruitment, retention, matching, training, and support services throughout the program. The role of Supervisors is to supervise, though in limited situations Supervisors may temporarily take on Caseworker responsibilities.

1.3.11.3 Caseworkers

The Contractor shall maintain Caseworkers to become the one Caseworker for Resource Families, acting as the single point of contact through Foster Family licensing/Adoptive Family approval, training, matching, and support through closure. Each Specialized Support Caseworker shall serve no more than thirty (30) licensed Foster Families. Each Post Adopt Caseworker shall serve no more than thirty-five (35) Post Adopt Families.

1.3.11.4 Trainers

The Contractor shall maintain Trainers who coordinate, plan, and conduct the training of Resource Families.

1.3.12 Joint Quality Improvement Activities

The Agency's Program Manager or designee and/or Service Contract Specialist, and the Contractor's Project Manager shall meet at least quarterly or more often as needed to review performance data, issues, trends, and problem-solve solutions for the Contract. The Contractor shall be available for all meetings with the Agency.

Additionally, the Contractor shall implement and utilize an established Quality Assurance and improvement system for tracking and evaluating the effectiveness of service delivery under this Contract and adherence to Agency approved and required elements of their Bid Proposal.

1.3.12.1 Service Area Leadership Teams

The Contractor shall organize Service Area leadership teams. Specifically, the Contractor shall:

- a) Review strategies and use data to assess barriers to achieving Agency goals. Assess whether the recruitment, retention, training and support process is providing the best possible service to Resource Families, Adoptive Families, and Kin and Fictive Kin placements.
- b) Assess whether the recruitment, retention, training and support process is providing the best possible post placement service to Adoptive Families, and Subsidized Guardianship placements.
- c) Review common, collective feedback from Caseworkers regarding the successes, needs, and challenges Foster Families, Adoptive and Subsidized Guardianship Families have provided to their Caseworkers.
- d) Collaborate with other Service Area Leadership Teams to share and develop strategies to improve the provision of services.
- e) Conduct Service Area Leadership Team meetings no less frequency than quarterly.

1.3.12.2 Service Area Quality Improvement Meetings

The Agency Service Area Manager and/or designee(s) will meet monthly with the Contractor's designee(s) and a designee(s) from the Service Area Leadership Team to engage in local problem solving and efforts to improve performance within the Service Area. This local quality improvement group will

jointly review performance data for the purpose of resolving issues and identifying positive trends. At each meeting, the quality improvement group will develop action steps and monitor outcomes for all areas of the Contract needing improvement in accordance with statewide protocol and the terms of the Contract. The meetings shall address licensing issues and other field level issues in a timely manner. During each quarter of the fiscal year, the group may engage in a more in-depth review including, but not limited to, such recommended activities as:

- a) Sampling Foster and Adoptive Family files for quality improvement of home study Packet content and timeliness
- b) Identifying methods for improving Resource Family support and retention
- c) Discussing strategies for Placement of Children for whom no match has been found utilizing the Late Match Report
- d) Identifying methods for making appropriate matches and providing more than one Placement option
- e) Discussing homes that have been placed on hold for a period of six months or more due to licensing or safety reasons to identify barriers for returning to matching status
- f) Discussing kin/Fictive Kin referrals and the successes and challenges identified for these homes in reaching formal licensing status
- g) Identifying methods for meeting Child and Family Service Review targets, and
- h) Identifying systemic barriers to improving performance.

1.3.12.3 Statewide Meetings

The Contractor shall attend the Agency's annual Child Welfare services Contractor meeting. The Contractor shall attend other meetings as needed or requested by the Agency.

1.3.12.4 Practice Standards

- a) The Contractor shall work in collaboration with the Agency to develop Practice Standards, which will be approved and finalized by the Agency in year one (1) of the contract.
- b) Contractor will provide services consistent with Agency approved Practice Standards.
- c) The Practice Standards shall be trained and implemented in year two (2) of the contract.

1.3.12.5 Online System Manual

- a) The Contractor shall work in collaboration with the developer of the Agency's online system to update and maintain the user guide with the current practice.

1.3.13 Dispute Resolution Protocol for Service Provision

The Contractor shall accept all Agency referrals to the Contractor for services described in this Contract. The Contractor must understand:

- Children referred for Placement matches may have complex and multi-dimensional needs
- Range and intensity of supportive services to Resource Families may vary widely, based on needs, skills, and experience of the individual Resource Family and needs of a Child or Children in Placement
- Recruitment needs may vary widely from Service Area to Service Area

If a Contractor, is directed by an Agency or JCS worker to provide a level of interventions or supports beyond what they believe is required or reasonable, the Contractor shall be expected to provide services to the family at the level directed by the Agency or JCS while the matter is being resolved. The Contractor can communicate the basis of their belief in writing or via electronic communication to the Agency or JCS worker and their supervisor. Every effort shall be made to resolve the service provision dispute at the lowest level possible, through discussions between the Agency or JCS worker and their supervisor and the Contractor worker and supervisor, generally within two (2) Business Days of receipt of the review request.

If the Contractor is not satisfied with the dispute resolution decision of the Agency or JCS worker and their supervisor, the Contractor may refer the situation in writing or via electronic communication to the respective Agency Service Area Manager (SAM) or designee for review. This review shall be generally completed within

four (4) Business Days after receipt of the request for review. After completion of this review, the Agency SAM or designee will communicate the Agency's decision in writing to the Contractor.

If a dispute over Contract terms is identified, the respective Agency Service Area Manager (SAM) or designee reviews the Contract dispute and refers to the Agency Service Contract Specialist. The Service Contract Specialist reviews the dispute and attempts to resolve the issue. If the issue is not resolved, the dispute is elevated to the Contract Owner where the dispute is negotiated with the Contractor.

1.3.14 Transition Activities

The Agency anticipates that to the greatest extent possible there will be a continuation of services from the time the Contractor(s) is announced until the beginning of the new Contract. Prior to the implementation of the new Contract, the Contractor shall:

- a) Have sufficient staff trained to conduct scheduled training for enrolled families.
- b) Train all home study workers in licensing and approval rules within six (6) months of the effective date of this Contract.
- c) Centralized Statewide Matching will be ready for implementation on the effective date of the contract.
- d) Make contact with all Resource Families within one (1) month of the effective date of the Contract.

1.3.15 Agency Responsibilities for Monitoring, Review, and Problem Reporting

1.3.15.1 Agency Monitoring

The Contract Manager, Service Contract Specialist, or designee will review Invoices and supporting documentation itemizing work performed prior to payment, determine compliance with general Contract terms, conditions, and requirements, and assess compliance with Deliverables, performance measures, or other associated requirements.

The Agency will assign a Service Contract Specialist to this Contract. The Service Contract Specialist will be responsible for the following Contract management responsibilities:

- a) Responding to day-to-day questions from the Contractor. The Service Contract Specialist may consult with the Agency Program Manager and/or other Agency staff as necessary to coordinate a response.
- b) Resolving, to the extent possible, Contract issues and disputes between the Agency and the Contractor, maintaining a log of disputes between the Agency and the Contractor, and referring any disputes that cannot be resolved to the Contract Owner.
- c) Monitoring the Agency's data on a regular basis, including any incentive payments the Contractor is eligible to obtain.
- d) Advising the Contractor of what incentive payments, the Contractor is eligible for and approving such Invoices.
- e) Conducting reviews of Contractor records, including the records of subcontractors as necessary, to validate the Contractor's service reporting and their compliance with the service requirements.
- f) Monitoring any Corrective Action Plan (CAP) that the Contractor is required to develop to improve their performance in meeting the service requirements described in the scope of work.
- g) Conducting reviews of the Contractor's overall Quality Assurance system as set forth in their plan in accordance with Agency requirements to validate that the Contractor is implementing a Quality Assurance system as described in their Contract.

1.3.15.2 Agency Review Clause

The Contract Manager, Service Contract Specialist, or designee will use the results of monitoring activities and other relevant data to assess the Contractor's overall performance and compliance with the Contract. At minimum, the Agency will conduct an annual review; however, reviews may occur more frequently at the Agency's discretion. As part of the review(s), the Agency may require the Contractor to provide additional

data, may perform reviews that occur at the discretion of the Agency, and may consider information from other sources.

The Agency may require one or more meetings to discuss the outcome of a review. Meetings may be held in person. During the review meetings, the parties will discuss the Deliverables that have been provided or are in process under this Contract, achievement of the performance measures, and any concerns identified through the Agency's Contract monitoring activities.

1.3.15.3 Problem Reporting

As stipulated by the Agency, the Contractor and/or Agency shall provide a report listing any problem or concern encountered. Records of such reports and other related communications issued in writing during the course of Contract performance shall be maintained by the parties. At the next scheduled meeting after a problem has been identified in writing, the party responsible for resolving the problem shall provide a report setting forth activities taken or to be taken to resolve the problem together with the anticipated completion dates of such activities. Any party may recommend alternative courses of action or changes that will facilitate problem resolution. The Contract Owner has final authority to approve problem-resolution activities.

The Agency's acceptance of a problem report shall not relieve the Contractor of any obligation under this Contract or waive any other remedy. The Agency's inability to identify the extent of a problem or the extent of damages incurred because of a problem shall not act as a waiver of performance or damages under this Contract.

1.3.15.4 Addressing Deficiencies

To the extent that deficiencies are identified in the Contractor's performance and notwithstanding other remedies available under this Contract, the Agency may require the Contractor to develop and comply with a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) acceptable to the Agency to resolve the deficiencies.

1.4 Performance Measures

1.4.1 Performance Measures Overview

Performance measures and targets are included as a part of this Contract and used to assess performance by the Contractor. The performance measures are designed to help further align Contractor incentives with better outcomes for Children and Resource Families. By meeting or exceeding the performance measures, the Contractor will show their commitment to improving RRTS services and outcomes.

The performance measures and targets included are the performance expectations. Up to an additional 10% of the Contractor's eligible fee may be earned as a performance incentive payment for meeting or exceeding performance measures. Payments for Post Adoption Support (Section 1.3.7.2) will be paid for using federal PSSF funds and are not eligible for incentive payments.

Contractors shall submit Invoices for performance incentive payments after review and approval of all applicable data and measures by the Agency Contract Manager or Service Contract Specialist.

The determination of whether a Contractor has met a performance measure will be made at the sole discretion of the Agency. The Agency may alter performance measures as it sees fit and add or extend performance measures for Contract years 3-6 as applicable. If the Contract is extended past the initial two-year period, and no adjustments have been made to performance measures, then the latest Contract year's performance measures will be extended to the next Contract year,

The following performance measures determine eligibility for performance incentive payments.

1.4.1.1 Performance Measure 1 – Stability

Children placed into a licensed Foster Family home within the quarterly reporting period will experience Stability in Placement. A Child placed into a licensed Foster Family Home when initially removed from the home will experience Stability in Placement as evidenced by remaining in the home or exiting foster care to Permanency. The Contract payment for performance will be based on the percent of Children who remain in the same licensed foster home 180 days after Placement or:

- will have exited the licensed foster home to a trial home visit working towards reunification;
- will have exited to a relative/Fictive Kin home;
- will have exited to a pre-adoptive Placement working toward Permanency;
- will have attained Permanency through adoption or guardianship; or
- will have exited the Emergency Foster Care placement within 48 hours of placement.

The percent of Children who have Stability for the first 180 days in Family Foster Care homes will be measured on a specific entry cohort. The entry cohort is Children who experience their first Placement into a Foster Family Home under this Contract. The entry cohort will be determined at the end of each measurement quarter. Performance will be evaluated 180 days after the last day of the measurement quarter. Any Child who experiences more than one licensed Foster Family Home Placement within the measurement quarter will be evaluated based upon the earliest of the licensed Foster Family Home Placements within the measurement quarter.

Example provided for clarity: The first measurement quarter of the contract is expected to be 7/1/2023-9/30/2023. The entry cohort for this measure will be all Children placed with a Resource family within the measurement quarter. For each Child, stability will be measured based on the 180-day time period starting on their entry date. Performance for this entry cohort will be evaluated after 4/1/2024 when all Children within the entry cohort have passed the six (6) month mark.

Contractor payment will be made quarterly by Service Area in the amount of \$14,392.12 when greater than or equal to 75% of Children in Family Foster Care will be stable in their first Placement for six (6) months.

1.4.1.3 Performance Measure 2 – Recruitment and Retention (Increase in Non-White Families)

The Contractor shall increase the net number of licensed non-white Foster Families Available for Matching, relative or Fictive Kin identified for a specific Child or Children on an annual basis. The Contractor's net increase in number of licensed non-white Foster Families will be based on the number of licensed non-white Foster Families Available for Matching relative or Fictive Kin identified for a specific Child or Children on July 1st at the beginning of that Contract year and the number of licensed non-white Foster Families Available for Matching relative or Fictive Kin identified for a specific Child or Children on June 30th at the end of that same Contract year.

The Contract payment will be made annually by Service Area in the amount of \$143,921.19 for performance and will be based on the net increases of 10% of non-white families that are currently licensed and retained during each contract year. Base will be established at the beginning of the contract.

1.4.1.4 Performance Measure 3 – Path to Licensure

The Contractor shall facilitate support for kin and Fictive Kin caregivers and contribute to the overall number of foster families. The Contractor's performance will be measured on whether the family has received a license to provide Foster Care.

The Contractor will receive \$250 for each Relative/Fictive Kin caregiver who becomes licensed within 180 days after Referral.

1.4.1.7 Performance Measure 4 – Safe in Resource Home

Safety is maintained for Children in foster and adoptive care. Statewide data provided by the Agency shall be used to determine if Performance Measure 4 has been met. Data will include all Children in licensed Family Foster Care or pre-adoptive care at any time during the quarter.

PM4 - Ninety-nine (99) percent of Children in licensed foster family or pre-adoptive care will be safe from abuse by their foster or pre-adoptive parents.

Payment for achieving this measure is in the amount of \$71,960.60 per quarter for each contract year if the Contractor achieves this measure based on statewide data.

Data Collection:

Statewide data collected by the Agency will be used to determine if the performance standards for Performance Measure 4 has been met. Data will include all Children in licensed Family Foster Care or pre-adoptive care, as defined in Section 1.3, at any time during the quarter.

1.4.1.8 Performance Measure 5 – Adoptive and Subsidized Guardianship Families Will Receive Supportive Services (No payment incentive)

Thirty percent of the families will accept and participate in services offered during required contractor check-ins which is minimally every six months.

1.5 Contract Payment Methodology.

Within each State fiscal year, the Agency will pay the Contractor the annual Contract value, (annual Contract value does not include incentive payments) paid in monthly installments. Monthly installments will consist of a monthly fixed fee for a majority of the services provided under this Contract.

A separate monthly fee for Post-Adoption Subsidized Guardianship Support (Section 1.3.9.2) will be paid for by federal PSSF funds. Contractor shall track expenditures for Post-Adoption Support funded by federal PSSF funds, and Contractor shall only be reimbursed for approved expenditures up to the set monthly amount. Allowable expenses for PSSF funds include costs related to the delivery of services, planning, consultation, coordination, training, Quality Assurance measures, data collection, evaluations, and supervision related to the provision of services referenced in Section 1.3.9.2. Administrative Costs are not allowable under PSSF for this RFP. Administrative Costs for the purposes of PSSF include payroll; personnel functions; management, maintenance and operation of space and property; data processing and computer services; accounting; budgeting; and auditing. PSSF funds are also prohibited for purchase or construction of facilities. If the annual allocation of PSSF funds are not used by the end of the fiscal year, the final monthly payment shall be reduced by the unspent balance.

Adoption Respite and Stability Payments will be separate reimbursable expenses paid by the Agency when paid by the Contractor to eligible families. Funds will be tracked by the Contractor in monthly Invoices and will be submitted to the Agency on a monthly basis for payment. These payments will be in addition to the base contract value. Adoption Respite will be reimbursed for no more than a total of \$100,000 per State Fiscal Year. Stability Payments will be reimbursed for no more than a total of \$150,000 per State Fiscal Year. Once funds are exhausted for these programs no additional funds will be available until the next SFY.

If approved, Contractor may also Invoice up to \$250,000 in approved start-up costs.

At the end of each Contract quarter and year, the Agency will review the Contractor's quarterly and annual report submissions. If the Contractor's report documents show compliance with applicable performance measures as set forth in Section 1.4, the Agency will authorize the Contractor to submit an Invoice for the additional earned performance incentive(s).

All Contractor Invoices shall document financial information in an Agency-approved manner so that the Agency obtains information necessary to report such costs to federal programs.

Contract Budget.

The Agency is limiting the funding that is available for these services. The maximum contract amount is dependent upon available state and federal funding, and therefore, the maximum contract amount and other payables may change.

The maximum contract amount shall not exceed \$17,012,167.50

Payment Category	
Annual Contract Value - RRTS Services (excluding Post-Adoption Support)	\$ 11,206,700.00
Monthly Contract Value - RRTS Services (excluding Post-Adoption Support)	\$ 933,891.67
Annual Contract Value - Post-Adoption Support	\$ 1,450,990.00
Monthly Contract Value - Post-Adoption Support	\$ 120,915.83
Maximum Annual Performance Measure Incentive Payment	\$ 1,120,670.00
Maximum Annual Adoption Stability Grants (reimbursed monthly based on expenses)	\$ 150,000.00
Adoption Respite (reimbursed monthly based on expenses)	\$ 100,000.00
Yearly Maximum Totals:	\$ 14,028,360.00

Performance Measure Incentive Payments	
Performance Measure 1 - Stability -Per SA (Quarterly)	\$ 11,206.70
Performance Measure 1 - Stability- State Total 2%	\$ 224,134.00
Performance Measure 2 -Per SA (Annual)	\$ 112,067.00
Performance Measure 2 - State total (Annual) 5%	\$ 560,335.00
Performance Measure 3 - State total will pay for 448 families	\$ 112,067.00
Performance Measure 4 - State (Quarterly)	\$ 56,033.50
Performance Measure 4 State Total 2%	\$ 224,134.00

Note that the budgeted dollars above do not include up to \$250,000 in start-up funds available to all Bidders with proper justification.

Section 2 Basic Information About the RFP Process

2.1 Issuing Officer.

The Issuing Officer is the sole point of contact regarding the RFP from the date of issuance until selection of the successful Bidder. The Issuing Officer for this RFP is:

Ryan Roovaart
Iowa Department of Human Services
Hoover Building, First Floor
1305 East Walnut Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
Phone: 515-281-4598
RRTS_ACFS-24-002@dhs.state.ia.us

2.2 Restriction on Bidder Communication.

From the issue date of this RFP until announcement of the successful Bidder, the Issuing Officer is the point of contact regarding the RFP. There may be no communication regarding this RFP with any State employee other than the Issuing Officer, except at the direction of the Issuing Officer or as otherwise noted in the RFP. This section shall not be construed as restricting communications related to the administration of any contract currently in effect between a Contractor and the Agency.

The Issuing Officer will respond only to questions regarding the procurement process. Questions pertaining to the interpretation of this RFP may be submitted in accordance with the Questions, Requests for Clarification, and Suggested Changes section of this RFP.

2.3 Downloading the RFP from the Internet.

The RFP and any related documents such as amendments or attachments (collectively the “RFP”), and responses to questions will be posted at the State of Iowa’s website for bid opportunities: <http://bidopportunities.iowa.gov/>. Check this website periodically for any amendments to this RFP. The posted version of the RFP is the official version. The Agency will only be bound by the official version of the RFP document(s). Bidders should ensure that any downloaded documents are in fact the most up to date and are unchanged from the official version.

2.4 Online Resources.

Resources related to this RFP are available at the following website: <https://dhs.iowa.gov/child-welfare-systems/procurement-information>

2.5 Intent to Bid.

The Agency requests that Bidders provide their intent to bid by email to the Issuing Officer by the date and time in the Procurement Timetable. The Bidder shall complete RRTS Attachment I – Intent to Bid form and send it to the issuing officer by the due date and time listed on the timetable. The Bidder may wish to request confirmation of receipt of the email from the Issuing Officer to ensure delivery. Do not submit letters of intent by mail, shipping service, or hand delivery. The intent to bid should include the Bidder's name, contact person, mailing address, email address, telephone number, and a statement of intent to submit a bid in response to this RFP. Though it is not mandatory that the Agency receive an intent to bid, the Agency will only respond to questions about the RFP that have been submitted by Bidders who have expressed their intent to bid. The Agency may cancel an RFP for lack of interest based on the number of letters of intent to bid received.

2.6 Bidders’ Conference.

The Bidders’ conference will be conducted via a Zoom on the date and time listed in the Procurement Timetable. Only Bidders who submitted an Intent to Bid form by the due date and time listed in the Procurement Timetable will be allowed to participate in the Bidders’ Conference. A Zoom invitation to the Bidders Conference

will be sent to the email listed on the Intent to Bid Form.

The purpose of the Bidders' conference is to inform prospective Bidders about the work to be performed and to provide prospective Bidders an opportunity to ask questions regarding the RFP. Verbal discussions at the conference shall not be considered part of the RFP unless incorporated into the RFP by amendment. Questions asked at the conference that cannot be adequately answered during the conference may be deferred and responded to in writing. Participation in this conference call is optional, but recommended as this will be the only opportunity to ask verbal questions regarding this RFP.

2.7 Questions, Requests for Clarification, and Suggested Changes.

Bidders who have provided their intent to bid on the RFP are invited to submit written questions, requests for clarifications, and/or suggestions for changes to the specifications of this RFP (hereafter "Questions") using the provided form (RRTS Attachment J - Questions, Requests for Clarifications, and Suggested Changes) by the due date and time provided in the Procurement Timetable. Bidders are not permitted to include assumptions in their Bid Proposals. Instead, Bidders shall address any perceived ambiguity regarding this RFP through the question-and-answer process. If the Questions pertain to a specific section of the RFP, the page and section number(s) must be referenced. Bidders shall submit questions using RRTS Attachment J - Questions, Requests for Clarifications and Suggested Changes to the Issuing Officer by email. The Bidder may wish to request confirmation of receipt from the Issuing Officer to ensure delivery. Do not submit questions by mail, shipping service, or hand delivery.

The Agency will post responses to questions received on the State's website at: <http://bidopportunities.iowa.gov/> by the dates provided in the Procurement Timetable. Follow-up questions to initial responses are permissible as long as all questions are received by the final due date and time for Bidder Questions as provided in the Procurement Timetable.

The Agency assumes no responsibility for verbal representations made by its officers or employees unless such representations are confirmed in writing and incorporated into the RFP. In addition, the Agency's written responses to Questions will not be considered part of the RFP. If the Agency decides to change the RFP, the Agency will issue an amendment.

2.8 Submission of Bid Proposal.

Each Bidder is responsible for ensuring that the Issuing Officer receives the Bid Proposal by the time and date specified in the Procurement Timetable at the address provided in the RFP for the Issuing Officer. The Agency will not waive this mandatory requirement. Any Bid Proposal received after this deadline will be rejected and will not be evaluated.

Bid Proposals are to be submitted in accordance with the Bid Proposal Formatting section of this RFP. Bid Proposals may not be hand-delivered to the Issuing Officer. Rather, Bid Proposals are to be mailed through the postal service or shipping service.

2.9 Amendment to the RFP and Bid Proposal.

Each Bidder is responsible for ensuring that the Issuing Officer receives the Bid Proposal and any permitted amendments by the established deadlines at the address provided in the RFP for the Issuing Officer. Amendments must be received utilizing the same delivery method as set forth in the RFP for the submission of the original Bid Proposal.

Bidders may amend a previously submitted Bid Proposal at any time before the bid submission date and time. Any such amendment must be in writing and signed by the Bidder. The Bidder shall provide the same number of copies of the amended Bid Proposal as is required for the original Bid Proposal, for both hardcopy and electronic copies, in accordance with the Bid Proposal Formatting Section.

The Agency reserves the right to amend or provide clarifications to the RFP at any time. RFP amendments will be posted to the State's website at <http://bidopportunities.iowa.gov/>. If an RFP amendment occurs after the closing date for receipt of Bid Proposals, the Agency may, in its sole discretion, allow Bidders to amend their Bid Proposals.

2.10 Withdrawal of Bid Proposal.

The Bidder may withdraw its Bid Proposal prior to the closing date for receipt of Bid Proposals by submitting a written request to withdraw signed by the Bidder, scanned, then emailed to the Issuing Officer. The Bidder should request confirmation of receipt of the email from the Issuing Officer to ensure delivery.

2.11 Costs of Preparing the Bid Proposal.

The costs of preparation and delivery of the Bid Proposal are solely the responsibility of the Bidder.

2.12 Rejection of Bid Proposals.

The Agency reserves the right to reject any or all Bid Proposals, in whole and in part, and to cancel this RFP at any time prior to the execution of a written contract. Issuance of this RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the Agency to award or enter into a contract.

2.13 Review of Bid Proposals.

Only Bidders that meet the mandatory requirements and are not subject to disqualification will be considered for award of a contract.

2.13.1 Mandatory Requirements.

Bidders must meet these mandatory requirements or will be disqualified and not considered for award of a contract:

- The Issuing Officer must receive the Bid Proposal, and any amendments thereof, prior to or on the due date and time (See RFP Sections 2.8 and 2.9).
- The Bidder is not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from receiving federal funding by any federal department or agency (See RFP Additional Certifications Attachment).
- The Bidder is eligible to submit a bid in accordance with the Bidder Eligibility Requirements of this RFP (See RFP Bidder Eligibility Requirements Section).
- The Bidder's Cost Proposal adheres to any pricing restrictions regarding the project Budget or Administrative cost (See RFP Section 3.3)

2.13.2 Reasons Proposals May be Disqualified.

Bidders are expected to follow the specifications set forth in this RFP. However, it is not the Agency's intent to disqualify Bid Proposals that suffer from correctable flaws. At the same time, it is important to maintain fairness to all Bidders in the procurement process. Therefore, the Agency reserves the discretion to permit cure of variances, waive variances, or disqualify Bid Proposals for reasons that include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- Bidder initiates unauthorized contact regarding this RFP with employees other than the Issuing Officer (See RFP Section 2.2);
- Bidder fails to comply with the RFP's formatting specifications so that the Bid Proposal cannot be fairly compared to other bids (See RFP Section 3.1);
- Bidder fails, in the Agency's opinion, to include the content required for the RFP;
- Bidder fails to be fully responsive in the Bidder's Approach to Meeting Deliverables Section, states an element of the Scope of Work cannot or will not be met, or does not include information necessary to substantiate that it will be able to meet the Scope of Work specifications (See RFP Section 3.2.3);

- Bidder's response materially changes Scope of Work specifications;
- Bidder fails to submit the RFP attachments containing all signatures (See RFP Section 3.2.6);
- Bidder marks entire Bid Proposal confidential, makes excessive claims for confidential treatment, or identifies pricing information in the Cost Proposal as confidential (See RFP Section 3.1);
- Bidder includes assumptions in its Bid Proposal (See RFP Section 2.7); or
- Bidder fails to respond to the Agency's request for clarifications, information, documents, or references that the Agency may make at any point in the RFP process.
- Bidder is a "scrutinized company" included on a "scrutinized company list" created by a public fund pursuant to Iowa Code §12J. This list is maintained by the Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System. The list is currently found here: <https://ipers.org/investments/restrictions>.

The determination of whether or not to disqualify a Proposal and not consider it for award of a contract for any of these reasons, or to waive or permit cure of variances in Bid Proposals, is at the sole discretion of the Agency. No Bidder shall obtain any right by virtue of the Agency's election to not exercise that discretion. In the event the Agency waives or permits cure of variances, such waiver or cure will not modify the RFP specifications or excuse the Bidder from full compliance with RFP specifications or other contract requirements if the Bidder enters into a contract.

2.14 Bid Proposal Clarification Process.

The Agency may request clarifications from Bidders for the purpose of resolving ambiguities or questioning information presented in the Bid Proposals. Clarifications may occur throughout the Bid Proposal evaluation process. Clarification responses shall be in writing and shall address only the information requested. Responses shall be submitted to the Agency within the time stipulated at the occasion of the request.

2.15 Verification of Bid Proposal Contents.

The contents of a Bid Proposal submitted by a Bidder are subject to verification.

2.16 Reference Checks.

The Agency reserves the right to contact any reference to assist in the evaluation of the Bid Proposal, to verify information contained in the Bid Proposal, to discuss the Bidder's qualifications, and/or to discuss the qualifications of any subcontractor identified in the Bid Proposal.

2.17 Information from Other Sources.

The Agency reserves the right to obtain and consider information from other sources concerning a Bidder, such as the Bidder's capability and performance under other contracts, and the Bidder's authority and ability to conduct business in the State of Iowa. Such other sources may include subject matter experts.

2.18 Criminal History and Background Investigation.

The Agency reserves the right to conduct criminal history and other background investigations of the Bidder, its officers, directors, shareholders, or partners and managerial and supervisory personnel retained by the Bidder for the performance of the resulting contract. The Agency reserves the right to conduct criminal history and other background investigations of the Bidder's staff and subcontractors providing services under the resulting contract.

2.19 Disposition of Bid Proposals.

Opened Bid Proposals become the property of the Agency and will not be returned to the Bidder. Upon issuance of the Notice of Intent to Award, the contents of all Bid Proposals will be in the public domain and be open to inspection by interested parties subject to exceptions provided in Iowa Code chapter 22 or other applicable law.

2.20 Public Records and Request for Confidential Treatment.

Original information submitted by a Bidder may be treated as public information by the Agency following the conclusion of the selection process unless the Bidder properly requests that information be treated as confidential at the time of submitting the Bid Proposal. See the Bid Proposal Formatting Section for the proper method for

making such requests. The Agency's release of information is governed by Iowa Code chapter 22. Bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with Chapter 22 before submitting a Bid Proposal. The Agency will copy public records as required to comply with public records laws.

The Agency will treat the information marked confidential as confidential information to the extent such information is determined confidential under Iowa Code chapter 22 or other applicable law by a court of competent jurisdiction. However, the Bidder shall certify by signing and returning RFP Attachment B its understanding that any Agency references to Bid Proposal information marked confidential made during the evaluation process may become part of the public domain

In the event the Agency receives a request for information marked confidential, written notice shall be given to the Bidder seventy-two (72) hours prior to the release of the information to allow the Bidder to seek injunctive relief pursuant to Iowa Code § 22.5 or 22.8.

The Bidder's failure to request confidential treatment of material pursuant to this section and the relevant law will be deemed, by the Agency and State personnel, as a waiver of any right to confidentiality that the Bidder may have had.

2.21 Copyrights.

By submitting a Bid Proposal, the Bidder agrees that the Agency may copy the Bid Proposal for purposes of facilitating the evaluation of the Bid Proposal or to respond to requests for public records. By submitting a Bid Proposal, the Bidder acknowledges that additional copies may be produced and distributed, and represents and warrants that such copying does not violate the rights of any third party. The Agency shall have the right to use ideas or adaptations of ideas that are presented in the Bid Proposals.

2.22 Release of Claims.

By submitting a Bid Proposal, the Bidder agrees that it shall not bring any claim or cause of action against the Agency based on any misunderstanding concerning the information provided herein or concerning the Agency's failure, negligent or otherwise, to provide the Bidder with pertinent information as intended by this RFP.

2.23 Reserved.

2.24 Notice of Intent to Award.

Notice of Intent to Award will be sent to all Bidders that submitted a Bid Proposal by the due date and time. The Notice of Intent to Award does not constitute the formation of a contract between the Agency and the apparent successful Bidder.

2.25 Acceptance Period.

The Agency shall make a good faith effort to negotiate and execute the contract. If the apparent successful Bidder fails to negotiate and execute a contract, the Agency may, in its sole discretion, revoke the Notice of Intent to Award and negotiate a contract with another Bidder or withdraw the RFP. The Agency further reserves the right to cancel the Notice of Intent to Award at any time prior to the execution of a written contract.

2.26 Review of Notice of Disqualification or Notice of Intent to Award Decision.

Bidders may request reconsideration of either a notice of disqualification or notice of intent to award decision by submitting a written request to the Agency:

Bureau Chief
c/o Bureau of Service Contract Support
Department of Human Services
Hoover State Office Building, 1st Floor
1305 E. Walnut Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0114
email: reconsiderationrequest@dhs.state.ia.us

The Agency must receive the written request for reconsideration within five days from the date of the notice of disqualification. The written request may be emailed or delivered by postal service or other shipping service. Do not deliver any requests for reconsideration to the office in person. It is the Bidder's responsibility to ensure that the request for reconsideration is received prior to the deadline. Postmarking or submission to a shipping service by the due date shall not substitute for actual receipt of a request for reconsideration by the Agency.

The request for reconsideration shall clearly and fully identify all issues being contested by reference to the page and section number of the RFP. If a Bidder submitted multiple Bid Proposals and requests that the Agency reconsider a notice of disqualification or notice of intent to award decision for more than one Bid Proposal, a separate written request shall be submitted for each. At the Agency's discretion, requests for reconsideration from the same Bidder may be reviewed separately or combined into one response. The Agency will expeditiously address the request for reconsideration and issue a decision. The Bidder may choose to file an appeal with the Agency within five days of the date of the decision on reconsideration in accordance with 441 IAC 7.41 et seq.

2.27 Definition of Contract.

The full execution of a written contract shall constitute the making of a contract for services and no Bidder shall acquire any legal or equitable rights Relative to the contract services until the contract has been fully executed by the apparent successful Bidder and the Agency.

2.28 Choice of Law and Forum.

This RFP and the resulting contract are governed by the laws of the State of Iowa without giving effect to the conflicts of law provisions thereof. Changes in applicable laws and rules may affect the negotiation and contracting process and the resulting contract. Bidders are responsible for ascertaining pertinent legal requirements and restrictions. Any and all litigation or actions commenced in connection with this RFP shall be brought and maintained in the appropriate Iowa forum.

2.29 Restrictions on Gifts and Activities.

Iowa Code chapter 68B restricts gifts that may be given or received by state employees and requires certain individuals to disclose information concerning their activities with state government. Bidders must determine the applicability of this Chapter to their activities and comply with the requirements. In addition, pursuant to Iowa Code § 722.1, it is a felony offense to bribe or attempt to bribe a public official.

2.30 Exclusivity.

Any contract resulting from this RFP shall not be an exclusive contract.

2.31 No Minimum Guaranteed.

The Agency anticipates that the selected Bidder will provide services as requested by the Agency. The Agency does not guarantee that any minimum compensation will be paid to the Bidder or any minimum usage of the Bidder's services.

2.32 Use of Subcontractors.

The Agency acknowledges that the selected Bidder may contract with third parties for the performance of any of the Contractor's obligations. The Agency reserves the right to provide prior approval for any subcontractor used to perform services under any contract that may result from this RFP.

2.33 Bidder Continuing Disclosure Requirement.

To the extent that Bidders are required to report incidents when responding to this RFP related to damages, penalties, disincentives, administrative or regulatory proceedings, founded Child or dependent adult abuse, or felony convictions, these matters are subject to continuing disclosure to the Agency. Incidents occurring after submission of a Bid Proposal, and with respect to the successful Bidder after the execution of a contract, shall be disclosed in a timely manner in a written statement to the Agency. For purposes of this subsection, timely means within thirty (30) days from the date of conviction, regardless of appeal rights.

Section 3 How to Submit a Bid Proposal: Format and Content Specifications

These instructions provide the format and technical specifications of the Bid Proposal and are designed to facilitate the submission of a Bid Proposal that is easy to understand and evaluate.

3.1 Bid Proposal Formatting.

Subject	Specifications
Paper Size	8.5" x 11" paper (one side only). Charts or graphs may be provided on legal-sized paper.
Font	Bid Proposals must be typewritten. The font must be 11 point or larger (excluding charts, graphs, or diagrams). Acceptable fonts include Times New Roman, Calibri and Arial.
Page Limit	Pages included in Proposal Tab 2 and any attachments the Bidder creates in a "Tab 2 Attachments" section is limited to 225 pages. See Section 3.2 for further information about Tab 2 Attachments
Pagination	All pages in Proposal Tabs 1-3 are to be sequentially numbered from beginning to end (do not number these Proposal sections independently of each other).
Bid Proposal General Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bid Proposals shall be divided into two parts: Technical Proposal and Cost Proposal • Technical Proposals submitted in multiple volumes shall be numbered in the following fashion: 1 of 10, 2 of 10, etc. • Bid Proposals must be bound and use tabs to label sections.
Envelope Contents and Labeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Envelopes shall be addressed to the Issuing Officer. • The envelope containing the original Bid Proposal shall be labeled "original." The Technical and Cost Proposal must be packaged separately. • The envelopes containing copies of the Bid Proposal shall be labeled as "Copy 1 of 10", "Copy 2 of 10," etc.
Number of Hard Copies	Submit one (1) original hard copy of the Proposal (separate Technical and Cost Proposals) The original hard copy must contain original signatures.
USB Flash Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Technical Proposal and Cost Proposal must be provided on a separate USB flash drive. Bidders shall submit 5 flash drives, each with a copy identical to the content of the original hard copy of the Technical Proposal and 1 USB flash drive of the Cost Proposal, each with a copy identical to the content of the original hard copy of the Cost Proposal. • The Technical Proposal must be saved in less than three files, with a preference for the entire Technical Proposal in one file. Proposals shall be provided in either PDF or Microsoft Word format. Files shall be text-based and not scanned image(s) and shall be searchable and not password protected or contain restrictions that prevent copying, saving, highlighting, or printing of the contents.
Request for Confidential Treatment	<p>Requests for confidential treatment of any information in a Bid Proposal must meet these specifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bidder will complete the appropriate section of the Primary Bidder Detail Form & Certification which requires the specific statutory citation supporting the request for confidential treatment and an explanation of why disclosure of the information is not in the best interest of the public. • The Bidder shall submit one complete paper copy of the Bid Proposal from which confidential information has been redacted. This copy shall be clearly labeled on the cover as a "public copy" and each page upon which confidential information appears shall be conspicuously marked as containing confidential information. The confidential material shall be redacted in such a way as to allow the public to determine the general nature of the material removed. To the extent possible, pages should be redacted sentence by sentence unless all material on a page is clearly confidential under the law. The Bidder shall not identify the entire Bid Proposal as confidential.

Subject	Specifications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cost Proposal will be part of the ultimate contract entered into with the successful Bidder. Pricing information may not be designated as confidential material. However, Cost Proposal supporting materials may be marked confidential if consistent with applicable law. • The Bidder shall submit a USB flash drive containing an electronic copy of the Bid Proposal from which confidential information has been redacted. This USB flash drive shall be clearly marked as a “public copy”. • The Technical Proposal must be saved in less than three files, with a preference for the entire Technical Proposal in one file. Proposals shall be provided in either PDF or Microsoft Word format. Files shall be text-based and not scanned image(s) and shall be searchable and not password protected or contain restrictions that prevent copying, saving, highlighting, or printing of the contents.
Exceptions to RFP/Contract Language	<p>If the Bidder objects to any term or condition of the RFP or attached Sample Contract, specific reference to the RFP page and section number shall be made in the Primary Bidder Detail & Certification Form. In addition, the Bidder shall set forth in its Bid Proposal the specific language it proposes to include in place of the RFP or contract provision and cost savings to the Agency should the Agency accept the proposed language.</p> <p>The Agency reserves the right to either execute a contract without further negotiation with the successful Bidder or to negotiate contract terms with the selected Bidder if the best interests of the Agency would be served.</p>

3.2 Contents and Organization of Technical Proposal.

This section describes the information that must be in the Technical Proposal. Bid Proposals should be organized into sections **in the same order provided here**. Hard copies of Bid Proposals should use tabs to separate each section. If a Bidder chooses to provide information in attachments to respond to any section below, please create a new tabbed attachment section immediately behind the applicable section. For example, to add attachments related to information asked for in Section 3.2.2 Information to Include Behind Tab 2: Bidder’s Approach to Meeting Deliverables, the Bidder would create a new tab in the Technical Proposal that is called Tab 2 Attachments and place the attachment(s) there. The Bidder would follow suit by creating new tabbed sections for attachments created to respond to any other section below in their Bid Proposal

3.2.1 Information to Include Behind Tab 1: Proposal Table of Contents.

The Bid Proposal must contain a table of contents.

3.2.2 Information to Include Behind Tab 2: Bidder’s Approach to Meeting Deliverables.

The Bidder shall complete the Technical Response Template included as RRTS Attachment K. Completion and submission of this document, along with the rest of the Technical Proposal described in Section 3.2, is a requirement for a complete Proposal. Bidder shall address each Deliverable that the successful Contractor will perform as listed in the Technical Response Template (Attachment K) detailing the Bidder’s planned approach to meeting each Contractor Deliverable. Bid responses should provide sufficient detail so that the Agency can understand and evaluate the Bidder’s approach and should not merely repeat the Deliverable.

Bidders are given wide latitude in the degree of detail they offer or the extent to which they reveal plans, designs, examples, processes, and procedures. Bidders do not need to address any responsibilities that are specifically designated as Agency responsibilities.

Note:

- Bid Proposals shall identify any deviations from the specifications the Bidder cannot satisfy.
- Bid Proposals shall not contain promotional or display materials unless specifically required.

- Any diagrams, certificates, graphics, tables or other exhibits referenced in the relevant Technical Proposal answer field should be included behind Tab 2 as a legible accurately referenced Attachment.
- For example, the Background Experience Section of the Technical Proposal Documents request a Matrix be created as well as 3 Letters of Reference among other things. Please include your Matrix, the 3 Letters of Reference, and any other exhibits required by the Technical Proposals as referenced Attachments in Tab 2 after your Technical Proposal(s).

If a Bidder proposes more than one method of meeting the RFP requirements, each method must be drafted and submitted as separate Bid Proposals. Each will be evaluated separately.

3.2.3 Information to Include Behind Tab 3: RFP Forms.

The forms listed below are attachments to this RFP. Fully complete and return these forms behind Tab 3:

- Attachment A: Release of Information Form
- Attachment B: Primary Bidder Detail & Certification Form
- Attachment C: Subcontractor Disclosure Form (one for each proposed subcontractor)
- Attachment E: Certification and Disclosure Regarding Lobbying Attachment
- Attachment F: Bidder Accreditation Form

3.3 Cost Proposal

The following annual budgets have been set:

Annual RRTS Services Contract Value -	\$11,206,700
Annual Post-Adoption Contract Value -	<u>\$ 1,450,990</u>
Total	\$12,657,690

The Contract will be paid on a monthly flat fee basis. There will be a separate monthly fee, based on actual costs, for Post Adoption Services paid for by federal PSSF funds. See Attachment P – Cost Proposal Template for more details.

Note that the budgeted dollars above do not include up to \$250,000 in start-up funds available to all Bidders with proper justification.

Also, the dollars included in the budgets or in the cost proposal do not include any incentive dollars tied to performance measures as listed in Section 1.4.

Content and Format.

The Cost Proposal shall be submitted using the pricing worksheet set forth in Attachment P of this RFP. Bidders should submit both an Excel version and printed version of Attachment P. Bidders may also include a cost proposal narrative.

Section 4 Evaluation of Bid Proposals
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4.1 Introduction.

This section describes the evaluation process that will be used to determine which Bid Proposal provides the greatest benefit to the Agency. When making this determination, the Agency will not necessarily award a contract to the Bidder offering the lowest cost to the Agency or to the Bidder with the highest point total. Rather, a contract will be awarded to the Bidder that offers the greatest benefit to the Agency.

4.2 Evaluation Committee.

The Agency intends to conduct a comprehensive, fair, and impartial evaluation of Bid Proposals received in response to this RFP. In making this determination, the Agency will be represented by an evaluation committee.

4.3 Proposal Scoring and Evaluation Criteria.

The evaluation committee will use the method described in this section to assist with initially determining the Relative merits of each Bid Proposal.

Scoring Guide.

Points will be assigned to each evaluation component as follows, unless otherwise designated:

4	Bidder has agreed to comply with the requirements and provided a clear and compelling description of how each requirement would be met, with relevant supporting materials. Bidder’s proposed approach frequently goes above and beyond the minimum requirements and indicates superior ability to serve the needs of the Agency.
3	Bidder has agreed to comply with the requirements and provided a good and complete description of how the requirements would be met. Response clearly demonstrates a high degree of ability to serve the needs of the Agency.
2	Bidder has agreed to comply with the requirements and provided an adequate description of how the requirements would be met. Response indicates adequate ability to serve the needs of the Agency.
1	Bidder has agreed to comply with the requirements and provided some details on how the requirements would be met. Response does not clearly indicate if all the needs of the Agency will be met.
0	Bidder has not addressed any of the requirements or has provided a response that is limited in scope, vague, or incomplete. Response did not provide a description of how the Agency’s needs would be met.

Technical Proposal Components.

When Bid Proposals are evaluated, the total points for each component are comprised of the component’s assigned weight multiplied by the score the Bid Proposal earns. Points for all components will be added together. The evaluation components, including maximum points that may be awarded, are as follows:

For each Respondent, there will be a Common Technical Proposal totaling a possible seven hundred (700) points as shown below.

The evaluation components are as follows (See Attachment K Technical Response Template for more information):

<u>Technical Response Template Components</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Score (0-4)</u>	<u>Potential Maximum Points</u>
Common Technical Proposal			
Background/Experience	10		40
1.3.1 Statewide Coverage	10		40
1.3.2 Collaboration and Consultation	10		40
1.3.3 Specialized Caseworker Model	13		52
1.3.4 Recruitment and Retention	15		60
1.3.5 Inquiry	6		24
1.3.6 Training	15		60
1.3.7 Foster Home Licensing and Adoptive Home Approval	15		60
1.3.8 Matching	15		60
1.3.9 Support	17		68
1.3.10 Reports and Data	7		28
1.3.11 Staffing	9		36
1.3.12 Joint Quality Improvement Activities	10		40
1.3.13 Dispute Resolution Protocol for Service Provision	6		24
1.3.14 Transition Activities	8		32
CEA Guiding Principles	9		36

Scoring of Cost Proposal Pricing.

Cost Proposal pricing will be scored based on a ratio of the lowest Cost Proposal versus the cost of each higher priced Bid Proposal. Under this formula, the lowest Cost Proposal receives all of the points assigned to pricing. A Cost Proposal twice as expensive as the lowest Cost Proposal would earn half of the available points. The formula is:

$$\text{Weighted Cost Score} = (\text{price of lowest Cost Proposal} / \text{price of Providers Cost Proposal}) \times (\text{points assigned to pricing}) = \text{Providers Cost Proposal Score}$$

Please note that the Agency is placing a cap on the amount of funds that may be spent for Administrative Costs in contracts resulting from this RFP. Spending on Administrative Costs under each Contract cannot exceed 15% of the total Contract amount.

Note that Post Adoption Support services as described in Section 1.3.9.2 of the RFP will be paid separately using federal Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) funds. The monthly maximum for PSSF funds are fixed. Contractors shall be reimbursed for approved expenditures up to the set monthly amount.

All Bidders may present and describe a justification for their need for start-up funding. Bidders shall list out their start-up costs and provide a detailed justification for the funding in Section F. Start-up funding is limited to a one-time \$250,000. Start-up costs will not be included as part of the Cost Proposal scoring. Also note that incentive payments are not included in the Cost Proposal.

Total Points Assigned to Pricing: Ten (10) points.

Total Points Possible for Technical Proposals and Cost Proposal: Seven hundred ten (710) points.

4.4 Presentations.

If presentations of Bid Proposals are requested, presentations may be limited to Bidders within a competitive range as determined at the sole discretion of the Agency. The competitive range will comprise the most highly rated

Proposals, and Bidders outside this range will be removed from further consideration. The Agency reserves the right to create a short list of Bidders within the competitive range regardless of whether the Agency requests Bidder presentations.

4.5 Recommendation of the Evaluation Committee.

The evaluation committee shall present a final ranking and recommendation(s) to the Division Administrator for consideration. In making this recommendation, the committee is not bound by any scores or scoring system used to assist with initially determining the Relative merits of each Bid Proposal. This recommendation may include, but is not limited to, the name of one or more Bidders recommended for selection or a recommendation that no Bidder be selected. The Division Administrator shall consider the committee's recommendation when making the final decision, but is not bound by the recommendation.

Attachment A: Release of Information
(Return this completed form behind Tab 3 of the Bid Proposal.)

_____ (name of Bidder) hereby authorizes any person or entity, public or private, having any information concerning the Bidder's background, including but not limited to its performance history regarding its prior rendering of services similar to those detailed in this RFP, to release such information to the Agency.

The Bidder acknowledges that it may not agree with the information and opinions given by such person or entity in response to a reference request. The Bidder acknowledges that the information and opinions given by such person or entity may hurt its chances to receive contract awards from the Agency or may otherwise hurt its reputation or operations. The Bidder is willing to take that risk. The Bidder agrees to release all persons, entities, the Agency, and the State of Iowa from any liability whatsoever that may be incurred in releasing this information or using this information.

Printed Name of Bidder Organization

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date

Printed Name

Attachment B: Primary Bidder Detail & Certification Form

(Return this completed form behind Tab 3 of the Proposal. If a section does not apply, label it “not applicable”.)

Primary Contact Information (individual who can address issues re: this Bid Proposal)	
Name:	
Address:	
Tel:	
Fax:	
E-mail:	
Primary Bidder Detail	
Business Legal Name (“Bidder”):	
“Doing Business As” names, assumed names, or other operating names:	
Parent Corporation Name and Address of Headquarters, if any:	
Form of Business Entity (i.e., corp., partnership, LLC, etc.):	
State of Incorporation/organization:	
Primary Address:	
Tel:	
Local Address (if any):	
Addresses of Major Offices and other facilities that may contribute to performance under this RFP/Contract:	
Number of Employees:	
Number of Years in Business:	
Primary Focus of Business:	
Federal Tax ID:	
DUNS #:	
Bidder’s Accounting Firm:	
If Bidder is currently registered to do business in Iowa, provide the Date of Registration:	
Do you plan on using subcontractors if awarded this Contract? {If “YES,” submit a Subcontractor Disclosure Form for each proposed subcontractor.}	
	(YES/NO)

Request for Confidential Treatment (See Section 3.1)		
Check Appropriate Box: <input type="checkbox"/> Bidder Does Not Request Confidential Treatment of Bid Proposal <input type="checkbox"/> Bidder Requests Confidential Treatment of Bid Proposal		
Location in Bid Proposal (Tab/Page)	Specific Grounds in Iowa Code Chapter 22 or Other Applicable Law Which Supports Treatment of the Information as Confidential	Justification of Why Information Should Be Kept in Confidence and Explanation of Why Disclosure Would Not Be in The Best Interest of the Public

Exceptions to RFP/Contract Language (See Section 3.1)			
RFP Section and Page	Language to Which Bidder Takes Exception	Explanation and Proposed Replacement Language:	Cost Savings to the Agency if the Proposed Replacement Language is Accepted

PRIMARY BIDDER CERTIFICATIONS

1. **BID PROPOSAL CERTIFICATIONS.** By signing below, Bidder certifies that:
 - 1.1 Bidder specifically stipulates that the Bid Proposal is predicated upon the acceptance of all terms and conditions stated in the RFP and the Sample Contract without change except as otherwise expressly stated in the Primary Bidder Detail & Certification Form. Objections or responses shall not materially alter the RFP. All changes to proposed contract language, including deletions, additions, and substitutions of language, must be addressed in the Bid Proposal. The Bidder accepts and shall comply with all Contract Terms and Conditions contained in the Sample Contract without change except as set forth in the Contract;
 - 1.2 Bidder has reviewed the Additional Certifications, which are incorporated herein by reference, and by signing below represents that Bidder agrees to be bound by the obligations included therein;
 - 1.3 Bidder has received any amendments to this RFP issued by the Agency;
 - 1.4 No cost or pricing information has been included in the Bidder’s Technical Proposal;
 - 1.5 If Bidder requests confidential treatment of any information submitted in its Proposal, the Bidder expressly acknowledges and agrees that the Agency’s evaluation document(s) may reference information of which the Bidder requested confidential treatment in the Bid Proposal. These Agency evaluation documents may then be in the public domain and be open to inspection by interested parties upon the Agency’s issuance of a Notice of Intent to Award. The Agency will not redact information or references to information in evaluation documents even in instances which a Bidder requested confidential treatment in the Bid Proposal; and,
 - 1.6 The person signing this Bid Proposal certifies that he/she is the person in the Bidder’s organization responsible for or authorized to make decisions regarding the prices quoted and, Bidder guarantees the availability of the services offered and that all Bid Proposal terms, including price, will remain firm until a contract has been executed for the services contemplated by this RFP or one year from the issuance of this RFP, whichever is earlier.

2. SERVICE AND REGISTRATION CERTIFICATIONS. By signing below, Bidder certifies that:

- 2.1 Bidder certifies that the Bidder’s organization has sufficient personnel and resources available to provide all services proposed by the Bid Proposal, and such resources will be available on the date the RFP states services are to begin. Bidder guarantees personnel proposed to provide services will be the personnel providing the services unless prior approval is received from the Agency to substitute staff;
- 2.2 Bidder certifies that if the Bidder is awarded the contract and plans to utilize subcontractors at any point to perform any obligations under the contract, the Bidder will (1) notify the Agency in writing prior to use of the subcontractor, and (2) apply all restrictions, obligations, and responsibilities of the resulting contract between the Agency and contractor to the subcontractors through a subcontract. The contractor will remain responsible for all Deliverables provided under this contract;
- 2.3 Bidder either is currently registered to do business in Iowa or agrees to register if Bidder is awarded a Contract pursuant to this RFP;
- 2.4 Bidder certifies it is either: 1) registered or will become registered with the Iowa Department of Revenue to collect and remit Iowa sales and use taxes as required by Iowa Code chapter 423; or 2) not a “retailer” of a “retailer maintaining a place of business in this state” as those terms are defined in Iowa Code subsections 423.1(42) & (43). The Bidder also acknowledges that the Agency may declare the Bid Proposal void if the above certification is false. Bidders may register with the Department of Revenue online at: <http://www.state.ia.us/tax/business/business.html>; and,
- 2.5 Bidder certifies it will comply with Davis-Bacon requirements if applicable to the resulting contract.

3. EXECUTION.

By signing below, I certify that I have the authority to bind the Bidder to the specific terms, conditions and technical specifications required in the Agency’s Request for Proposals (RFP) and offered in the Bidder’s Proposal. I understand that by submitting this Bid Proposal, the Bidder agrees to provide services described herein which meet or exceed the specifications of the Agency’s RFP unless noted in the Bid Proposal and at the prices quoted by the Bidder. The Bidder has not participated, and will not participate, in any action contrary to the anti-competitive obligations outlined in the Additional Certifications. I certify that the contents of the Bid Proposal are true and accurate and that the Bidder has not made any knowingly false statements in the Bid Proposal.

Signature:	
Printed Name/Title:	
Date:	

Attachment C: Subcontractor Disclosure Form

*(Return this completed form behind Tab 3 of the Bid Proposal. Fully complete a form for **each** proposed subcontractor. If a section does not apply, label it “not applicable.” If the Bidder does not intend to use subcontractor(s), this form does not need to be returned.)*

Primary Bidder (“Primary Bidder”):	
Subcontractor Contact Information (individual who can address issues re: this RFP)	
Name:	
Address:	
Tel:	
Fax:	
E-mail:	

Subcontractor Detail	
Subcontractor Legal Name (“Subcontractor”):	
“Doing Business As” names, assumed names, or other operating names:	
Form of Business Entity (i.e., corp., partnership, LLC, etc.)	
State of Incorporation/organization:	
Primary Address:	
Tel:	
Fax:	
Local Address (if any):	
Addresses of Major Offices and other facilities that may contribute to performance under this RFP/Contract:	
Number of Employees:	
Number of Years in Business:	
Primary Focus of Business:	
Federal Tax ID:	
Subcontractor’s Accounting Firm:	
If Subcontractor is currently registered to do business in Iowa, provide the Date of Registration:	
Percentage of Total Work to be performed by this Subcontractor pursuant to this RFP/Contract.	
General Scope of Work to be performed by this Subcontractor	
Detail the Subcontractor’s qualifications for performing this scope of work	

By signing below, Subcontractor agrees to the following:

1. Subcontractor has reviewed the RFP, and Subcontractor agrees to perform the work indicated in this Bid Proposal if the Primary Bidder is selected as the winning Bidder in this procurement;
2. Subcontractor has reviewed the Additional Certifications and by signing below confirms that the Certifications are true and accurate and Subcontractor will comply with all such Certifications;
3. Subcontractor recognizes and agrees that if the Primary Bidder enters into a contract with the Agency as a result of this RFP, all restrictions, obligations, and responsibilities of the contractor under the contract shall also apply to the subcontractor;
4. Subcontractor agrees that it will register to do business in Iowa before performing any services pursuant to this contract, if required to do so by Iowa law; and,
5. Subcontractor certifies that it will comply with Davis-Bacon requirements if applicable to the resulting contract.

The person signing this Subcontractor Disclosure Form certifies that he/she is the person in the Subcontractor's organization responsible for or authorized to make decisions regarding the prices quoted and the Subcontractor has not participated, and will not participate, in any action contrary to the anti-competitive obligations outlined in the Additional Certifications.

I hereby certify that the contents of the Subcontractor Disclosure Form are true and accurate and that the Subcontractor has not made any knowingly false statements in the Form.

Signature for Subcontractor:	
Printed Name/Title:	
Date:	

Attachment D: Additional Certifications
(Do not return this page with the Bid Proposal.)

1. CERTIFICATION OF INDEPENDENCE AND NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST

By submission of a Bid Proposal, the Bidder certifies (and in the case of a joint proposal, each party thereto certifies) that:

1. The Bid Proposal has been developed independently, without consultation, communication or agreement with any employee or consultant of the Agency who has worked on the development of this RFP, or with any person serving as a member of the evaluation committee;
2. The Bid Proposal has been developed independently, without consultation, communication or agreement with any other Bidder or parties for the purpose of restricting competition;
3. Unless otherwise required by law, the information in the Bid Proposal has not been knowingly disclosed by the Bidder and will not knowingly be disclosed prior to the award of the contract, directly or indirectly, to any other Bidder;
4. No attempt has been made or will be made by the Bidder to induce any other Bidder to submit or not to submit a Bid Proposal for the purpose of restricting competition;
5. No relationship exists or will exist during the contract period between the Bidder and the Agency that interferes with fair competition or is a conflict of interest.
6. The Bidder and any of the Bidder's proposed subcontractors have no other contractual relationships which would create an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

2. CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, INELIGIBILITY AND VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION -- LOWER TIER COVERED TRANSACTIONS

By signing and submitting this Bid Proposal, the Bidder is providing the certification set out below:

1. The certification in this clause is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was entered into. If it is later determined that the Bidder knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government the Agency or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.
2. The Bidder shall provide immediate written notice to the person to whom this Bid Proposal is submitted if at any time the Bidder learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or had become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.
3. The terms covered transaction, debarred, suspended, ineligible, lower tier covered transaction, participant, person, primary covered transaction, principle, Proposal, and voluntarily excluded, as used in this clause, have the meaning set out in the Definitions and Coverage sections of rules implementing Executive Order 12549. You may contact the person to which this Proposal is submitted for assistance in obtaining a copy of those regulations.
4. The Bidder agrees by submitting this Proposal that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by the Agency or agency with which this transaction originated.
5. The Bidder further agrees by submitting this Proposal that it will include this clause titled "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion--Lower Tier Covered Transaction," without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions.

6. A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that it is not proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions, unless it knows that the certification is erroneous. A participant may decide the method and frequency by which it determines the eligibility of its principals. A participant may, but is not required to, check the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Non-procurement Programs.
7. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the certification required by this clause. The knowledge and information of a participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.
8. Except for transactions authorized under paragraph 4 of these instructions, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly enters into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is proposed for debarment under 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4, suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government, the Agency or agency with which this transaction originated may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.

3. CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, INELIGIBILITY AND/OR VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION--LOWER TIER COVERED TRANSACTIONS

1. The Bidder certifies, by submission of this Proposal, that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency.
2. Where the Bidder is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such Bidder shall attach an explanation to this Proposal.

4. CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH PRO-CHILDREN ACT OF 1994

By signing and submitting this Bid Proposal, the Bidder is providing the certification set out below:

The Bidder must comply with Public Law 103-227, Part C Environmental Tobacco Smoke, also known as the Pro-Children Act of 1994 (Act). This Act requires that smoking not be permitted in any portion of any indoor facility owned or leased or contracted by an entity and used routinely or regularly for the provision of health, day care, education, or library services to Children under the age of 18, if the services are funded by federal programs either directly or through State or local governments. Federal programs include grants, cooperative agreements, loans or loan guarantees, and contracts. The law also applies to Children's services that are provided in indoor facilities that are constructed, operated, or maintained with such federal funds. The law does not apply to Children's services provided in private residences; portions of facilities used for inpatient drug or alcohol treatment; service providers whose sole source of applicable federal funds is Medicare or Medicaid; or facilities (other than clinics) where WIC coupons are redeemed.

The Bidder further agrees that the above language will be included in any subawards that contain provisions for Children's services and that all subgrantees shall certify compliance accordingly. Failure to comply with the provisions of this law may result in the imposition of a civil monetary penalty of up to \$1000 per day.

5. CERTIFICATION REGARDING DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

1. **Requirements for Contractors Who are Not Individuals.** If the Bidder is not an individual, by signing and submitting this Bid Proposal the Bidder agrees to provide a drug-free workplace by:
 - a. publishing a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the person's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violations of such prohibition;

- b. establishing a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about:
 - (1) the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;
 - (2) the person's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;
 - (3) any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and
 - (4) the penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations;
 - c. making it a requirement that each employee to be engaged in the performance of such contract be given a copy of the statement required by subparagraph (a);
 - d. notifying the employee in the statement required by subparagraph (a), that as a condition of employment on such contract, the employee will:
 - (1) abide by the terms of the statement; and
 - (2) notify the employer of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than 5 days after such conviction;
 - e. notifying the contracting agency within 10 days after receiving notice under subparagraph (d)(2) from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction;
 - f. imposing a sanction on, or requiring the satisfactory participation in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program by, any employee who is so convicted, as required by 41 U.S.C. § 703; and
 - g. making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of subparagraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), and (f).
2. **Requirement for Individuals.** If the Bidder is an individual, by signing and submitting this Bid Proposal the Bidder agrees to not engage in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance in the performance of the contract.
3. **Notification Requirement.** The Bidder shall, within 30 days after receiving notice from an employee of a conviction pursuant to 41 U.S.C. § 701(a)(1)(D)(ii) or 41 U.S.C. § 702(a)(1)(D)(ii):
- a. take appropriate personnel action against such employee up to and including termination; or
 - b. require such employee to satisfactorily participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a Federal, State, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.

6. NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Bidder does not discriminate in its employment practices with regard to race, color, religion, age (except as provided by law), sex, marital status, political affiliation, national origin, or handicap.

Attachment E: Certification and Disclosure Regarding Lobbying Attachment
(Return this executed form behind Tab 3 of the Bid Proposal.)

Instructions:

Title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 93 requires the bidder to include a certification form, and a disclosure form, if required, as part of the bidder's proposal. Award of the federally funded contract from this RFP is a Covered Federal action.

- 1) The bidder shall file with the Agency this certification form, as set forth in Appendix A of 45 CFR Part 93, certifying the bidder, including any subcontractor(s) at all tiers (including subcontracts, sub-grants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) have not made, and will not make, any payment prohibited under 45 CFR § 93.100.
- 2) The bidder shall file with the Agency a disclosure form, set forth in Appendix B of 45 CFR Part 93, in the event the bidder or subcontractor(s) at any tier (including subcontracts, sub-grants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) has made or has agreed to make any payment using non-appropriated funds, including profits from any covered Federal action, which would be prohibited under 45 CFR § 93.100 if paid for with appropriated funds. All disclosure forms shall be forwarded from tier to tier until received by the bidder and shall be treated as a material representation of fact upon which all receiving tiers shall rely.

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

- (1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
- (2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.
- (3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.

Submission of this statement is a pre-requisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 for each such failure.

I certify that the contents of this certification are true and accurate and that the bidder has not made any knowingly false statements in the Bid Proposal. I am checking the appropriate box below regarding disclosures required in Title 45 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 93.

- The bidder is NOT including a disclosure form as referenced in this form's instructions because the bidder is NOT required by law to do so.
- The bidder IS filing a disclosure form with the Agency as referenced in this form's instructions because the bidder IS required by law to do so. If the bidder is filing a disclosure form, place the form immediately behind this in the Proposal.

Signature:	
Printed Name/Title:	
Date:	

Attachment F: Bidder Accreditation Form
(Return this completed form behind Tab 3 of the Bid Proposal.)

Primary Contact Information (individual who can address issues re: this Bid Proposal)	
Name:	
Address:	
Tel:	
Fax:	
E-mail:	

Bidder must select Bidder’s accreditation status from the options below:

Licensed

- Currently licensed by the Agency to provide Foster Care and adoption services in Iowa as a licensed Child-Placing Agency or
- Currently licensed in good standing in another state to provide Foster Care and adoption services. Organizations that are licensed in another state will be expected to become a licensed Child-Placing Agency in Iowa prior to the execution of a Contract if the organization is the selected Bidder.

Accreditation

- Accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA) for one or more of services including Child protective services, family preservation and stabilization services, Foster Care services, or kinship care services and affirms their commitment to maintain that accreditation during the Contract period; or
- Accredited by the Joint Commission for Behavioral Health Care Services and affirms their commitment to maintain that accreditation during the Contract periods; or
- Accredited by the Council on Accreditation for Rehabilitation Services (CARF) for child and youth services and affirms their commitment to maintain that accreditation during the contract period; or
- Committed to apply for accreditation with any of these three organizations, if not currently accredited, within three (3) months of executing a Contract with the Agency, receive accreditation within twenty-one (21) months of the Contract execution date, and maintain accreditation for the remainder of the Contract period.

If currently accredited, provide a copy of the current certificate with this form.

By signing below the bidder agrees to the accreditation requirements:

Signature:	
Printed Name/Title:	
Date:	

Attachments Specific to this RFP

ATTACHMENT G - Recruitment Retention Training, and Support Data
ATTACHMENT H – CEA – Guiding Principles
ATTACHMENT I – Intent to Bid
ATTACHMENT J – Questions, Requests for Clarifications and Suggested Changes
ATTACHMENT K – Technical Response Template
ATTACHMENT L - Families First Blueprint for Iowa’s Future Child Welfare System
ATTACHMENT M – DHS Service Area Map
ATTACHMENT N – Resource Parent Home Study
ATTACHMENT O – DHS Child Welfare Model of Practice
ATTACHMENT P – Cost Proposal
ATTACHMENT Q - Vendor Security Questionnaire
ATTACHMENT R - Sample Contract

Attachment R: Sample Contract

(These contract terms contained in the Special Terms, General Terms, and Contingent Terms for Services Contracts are not intended to be a complete listing of all contract terms but are provided only to enable Bidders to better evaluate the costs associated with the RFP and the potential resulting contract. Bidders should plan on such terms being included in any contract entered into as a result of this RFP. All costs associated with complying with these terms should be included in the Cost Proposal or any pricing quoted by the Bidder. See RFP Section 3.1 regarding Bidder exceptions to contract language.)

This is a sample form. DO NOT complete and return this attachment.

CONTRACT DECLARATIONS AND EXECUTION

RFP #	Contract #
ACFS 24-002	<i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i>

Title of Contract
<i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i>

This Contract must be signed by all parties before the Contractor provides any Deliverables. The Agency is not obligated to make payment for any Deliverables provided by or on behalf of the Contractor before the Contract is signed by all parties. This Contract is entered into by the following parties:

Agency of the State (hereafter “Agency”)	
Name/Principal Address of Agency: Iowa Department of Human Services 1305 E. Walnut Des Moines, IA 50319-0114	Agency Billing Contact Name / Address: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i>
Agency Contract Manager (hereafter “Contract Manager”) /Address (“Notice Address”): <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i>	Agency Contract Owner (hereafter “Contract Owner”) / Address: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i>

Contractor: (hereafter “Contractor”)	
Legal Name: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i>	Contractor’s Principal Address: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i>
Tax ID #: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i>	Organized under the laws of: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i>
Contractor’s Contract Manager Name/Address (“Notice Address”): <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i>	Contractor’s Billing Contact Name/Address: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i>

Contract Information	
Start Date: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i>	End Date of Base Term of Contract: End Date of Contract: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i>
Possible Extension(s): <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i>	
Contract Contingent on Approval of Another Agency: Yes Which Agency? TO BE DETERMINED	ISPO Number: ADD ISPO Number
Contract Include Sharing SSA Data? Yes	DoIT Number: N/A

Contract Execution

This Contract consists of this Contract Declarations and Execution Section, the Special Terms, any Special Contract Attachments, the General Terms for Services Contracts, and the Contingent Terms for Service Contracts.

In consideration of the mutual covenants in this Contract and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt, adequacy and legal sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the parties have entered into this Contract and have caused their duly authorized representatives to execute this Contract.

SECTION 1: SPECIAL TERMS

1.1 Special Terms Definitions.

{To be completed when contract is drafted.}

1.2 Contract Purpose.

{To be completed when contract is drafted.}

1.3 Scope of Work.

1.3.1 Deliverables.

The Contractor shall provide the following:

{To be completed when contract is drafted.}

1.3.2 Performance Measures.

{To be completed when contract is drafted.}

1.3.3 Agency Responsibilities.

{To be completed when contract is drafted.}

1.3.4 Monitoring, Review, and Problem Reporting.

1.3.4.1 Agency Monitoring Clause. The Contract Manager or designee will:

- Verify Invoices and supporting documentation itemizing work performed prior to payment;
- Determine compliance with general contract terms, conditions, and requirements; and
- Assess compliance with Deliverables, performance measures, or other associated requirements based on the following:
 - *{To be completed when contract is drafted.}*

1.3.4.2 Agency Review Clause. The Contract Manager or designee will use the results of monitoring activities and other relevant data to assess the Contractor's overall performance and compliance with the Contract. At a minimum, the Agency will conduct a review semi-annually; however, reviews may occur more frequently at the Agency's discretion. As part of the review(s), the Agency may require the Contractor to provide additional data, may perform on-site reviews, and may consider information from other sources.

The Agency may require one or more meetings to discuss the outcome of a review. Meetings may be held in person. During the review meetings, the parties will discuss the Deliverables that have been provided or are in process under this Contract, achievement of the performance measures, and any concerns identified through the Agency's contract monitoring activities.

1.3.4.3 Problem Reporting. As stipulated by the Agency, the Contractor and/or Agency shall provide a report listing any problem or concern encountered. Records of such reports and other related communications issued in writing during the course of Contract performance shall be maintained by the parties. At the next scheduled meeting after a problem has been identified in writing, the party responsible for resolving the problem shall provide a report setting forth activities taken or to be taken to resolve the problem together with the anticipated completion dates of such activities. Any party may recommend alternative courses of action or changes that will facilitate problem resolution. The Contract Owner has final authority to approve problem-resolution activities.

The Agency's acceptance of a problem report shall not relieve the Contractor of any obligation under this Contract or waive any other remedy. The Agency's inability to identify the extent of a problem or the extent of damages incurred because of a problem shall not act as a waiver of performance or damages under this Contract.

1.3.4.4 Addressing Deficiencies. To the extent that Deficiencies are identified in the Contractor's performance and notwithstanding other remedies available under this Contract, the Agency may require the Contractor to develop and comply with a plan acceptable to the Agency to resolve the Deficiencies.

1.3.5 Contract Payment Clause.

1.3.5.1 Pricing. In accordance with the payment terms outlined in this section and the Contractor's completion of the Scope of Work as set forth in this Contract, the Contractor will be compensated as follows:

{To be completed when contract is drafted.}

1.3.5.2 Payment Methodology.

{To be completed when contract is drafted.}

1.3.5.3 Timeframes for Regular Submission of Initial and Adjusted Invoices. The Contractor shall submit an Invoice for services rendered in accordance with this Contract. Invoice(s) shall be submitted monthly. Unless a longer timeframe is provided by federal law, and in the absence of the express written consent of the Agency, all Invoices shall be submitted within six months from the last day of the month in which the services were rendered. All adjustments made to Invoices shall be submitted to the Agency within ninety (90) days from the date of the Invoice being adjusted. Invoices shall comply with all applicable rules concerning payment of such claims.

1.3.5.4 Submission of Invoices at the End of State Fiscal Year. Notwithstanding the timeframes above, and absent (1) longer timeframes established in federal law or (2) the express written consent of the Agency, the Contractor shall submit all Invoices to the Agency for payment by August 1st for all services performed in the preceding state fiscal year (the State fiscal year ends June 30).

1.3.5.5 Payment of Invoices. The Agency shall verify the Contractor's performance of the Deliverables and timeliness of Invoices before making payment. The Agency will not pay Invoices that are not considered timely as defined in this Contract. If the Contractor wishes for untimely Invoice(s) to be considered for payment, the Contractor may submit the Invoice(s) in accordance with instructions for the Long Appeal Board Process to the State Appeal Board for consideration. Instructions for this process may be found at:

http://www.dom.state.ia.us/appeals/general_claims.html.

The Agency shall pay all approved Invoices in arrears and in conformance with Iowa Code 8A.514. The Agency may pay in less than sixty (60) days, but an election to pay in less than sixty (60) days shall not act as an implied waiver of Iowa law.

1.3.5.6 Reimbursable Expenses. Unless otherwise agreed to by the parties in an amendment to the Contract that is executed by the parties, the Contractor shall not be entitled to receive any other payment or compensation from the State for any Deliverables provided by or on behalf of the Contractor pursuant to this Contract. The Contractor shall be solely responsible for paying all costs, expenses, and charges it incurs in connection with its performance under this Contract.

1.4 Insurance Coverage.

The Contractor and any subcontractor shall obtain the following types of insurance for at least the minimum amounts listed below:

Type of Insurance	Limit	Amount
General Liability (including contractual liability) written on occurrence basis	General Aggregate	\$2 Million
	Product/Completed Operations Aggregate	\$1 Million
	Personal Injury	\$1 Million
	Each Occurrence	\$1 Million
Automobile Liability (including any auto, hired autos, and non-owned autos)	Combined Single Limit	\$1 Million
Excess Liability, Umbrella Form	Each Occurrence	\$1 Million
	Aggregate	\$1 Million
Workers' Compensation and Employer Liability	As required by Iowa law	As Required by Iowa law
Property Damage	Each Occurrence	\$1 Million
	Aggregate	\$1 Million
Professional Liability	Each Occurrence	\$2 Million
	Aggregate	\$2 Million

1.5 Data and Security. If this Contract involves Confidential Information, the following terms apply:

1.5.1 Data and Security System Framework. The Contractor shall comply with either of the following:

- Provide certification of compliance with a minimum of one of the following security frameworks, if the Contractor is storing Confidential Information electronically: NIST SP 800-53, HITRUST version 9, SOC 2, COBIT 5, CSA STAR Level 2 or greater, ISO 27001 or PCI-DSS version 3.2 prior to implementation of the system and again when the certification(s) expire, or
- Provide attestation of a passed information security risk assessment, passed network penetration scans, and passed web application scans (when applicable) prior to implementation of the system and again annually thereafter. For purposes of this section, “passed” means no unresolved high or critical findings.

1.5.2 Vendor Security Questionnaire. If not previously provided to the Agency through a procurement process specifically related to this Contract, the Contractor shall provide a fully completed copy of the Agency’s Vendor Security Questionnaire (VSQ) attachment Q.

1.5.3 Cloud Services. If using cloud services to store Agency Information, the Contractor shall comply with either of the following:

- Provide written designation of FedRAMP authorization with impact level moderate prior to implementation of the system, or
- Provide certification of compliance with a minimum of one of the following security frameworks: HITRUST version 9, SOC 2, COBIT 5, CSA STAR Level 2 or greater or PCI-DSS version 3.2 prior to implementation of the system and again when the certification(s) expire.

1.5.4 Addressing Concerns. The Contractor shall timely resolve any outstanding concerns identified by the Agency regarding the Contractor’s submissions required in this section.

1.6 Reserved. (Labor Standards Provisions.)

1.7 Incorporation of General and Contingent Terms.

1.7.1 General Terms for Service Contracts (“Section 2”). The version of the General Terms for Services Contracts Section posted to the Agency’s website at <https://dhs.iowa.gov/contract-terms> that is in effect as of the date of last signature in the Contract Declarations and Execution section, or a more current version if agreed to by amendment, is incorporated into the Contract by reference. The General Terms for Service Contracts may be referred to as Section 2.

The contract warranty period (hereafter "Warranty Period") referenced within the General Terms for Services Contracts is as follows: The term of this Contract, including any extensions.

1.7.2 Contingent Terms for Service Contracts (“Section 3”). The version of the Contingent Terms for Services Contracts posted to the Agency’s website at <https://dhs.iowa.gov/contract-terms> that is in effect as of the date of last signature in the Contract Declarations and Execution section, or a more current version if agreed to by amendment, is incorporated into the Contract by reference. The Contingent Terms for Service Contracts may be referred to as Section 3.

All of the terms set forth in the Contingent Terms for Service Contracts apply to this Contract unless indicated otherwise in the table below:

<p>Contract Payments include Federal Funds? Yes <i>{The items below will be completed if the Contract includes Federal Funds}</i> The Contractor for federal reporting purposes under this Contract is a: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i> Office of Child Support Enforcement (“OCSE”) Funded Percentage: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i> Federal Funds Include Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) funds? <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i> DUNS #: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i> The Name of the Pass-Through Entity: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i> CFDA #: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i> Grant Name: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i> Federal Awarding Agency Name: <i>{To be completed when contract is drafted.}</i></p>	
Contractor a Business Associate? Yes	Contractor a Qualified Service Organization? Yes
Contractor subject to Iowa Code Chapter 8F?	Contract Includes Software (modification, design, development, installation, or operation of software on behalf of the Agency)? No

1.8 Additional Terms. The Contractor shall comply with the following:
{To be completed when contract is drafted.}

SECTION 2. GENERAL TERMS FOR SERVICES CONTRACTS

https://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/DHS_Section_2_Terms_5.19.21.pdf?011320221946

https://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/DHS_Section_3_Terms_12-6-21.pdf?011320221951