State of Alaska
Department of Health and Social Services
Division of Office of Children's Services

Request for Proposals
Services for Adoption Support
For FY2018 Through FY2021

Grants and Contracts

NOTICE: Proposals will ONLY be accepted through GEMS. Applicants are responsible for reviewing the GEMS homepage at https://gems.dhss.alaska.gov/ for details regarding agency registration and availability of technical assistance. Log into GEMS through myAlaska, https://my.alaska.gov/Welcome.aspx, to begin the application process. Once you are logged into GEMS, guidance and instruction are available in the Documents tab and from the film strip icon. Applicants are responsible for monitoring GEMS or the State Online Public Notices site for any changes or amendments that may be issued regarding this solicitation.

Relay Alaska provides assisted communication services at 711 or 1-800-770-8973 from a TTY phone, and at 1-800-770-8255 from a voice phone.

CONTACT PERSON: Donna Jones, Grants Administrator
PHONE: (907)465-3469
E-MAIL: donna.jones@alaska.gov

PROPOSAL DUE DATE: March 31, 2017, 3:59 PM
DEADLINE FOR WRITTEN INQUIRIES: March 21, 2017, 3:59 PM
PROJECT PERIOD BEGINS: July 1, 2017

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Amendments

Amendment 1 Question and Answer **Posted: 2/3/2017**

Explanation

This amendment serves to answer questions regarding the Services for Adoption Support RFP.

Additional Information

Questions: What is the anticipated number of families to be served each year? How many children does OCS have finalizing guardianship and adoption each year?

Answer: Based on information from existing grant services, we can anticipate at least 350 unduplicated contacts with adoptive/guardianship families per quarter. OCS finalizes approximately 300-350 adoptions/guardianships per year. We do not have information about how many private adoptions and guardianships finalize in Alaska, but those families are eligible for the support services as well.

Section 1 Grant Program Information

1.01 Introduction and Program Description

The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS/Department), Office of Children's Services (OCS), is requesting proposals from eligible applicants to provide Services for Adoption Support (SAS) services for the State of Alaska in FY2018 thru FY2021. Program Services are authorized under 7 AAC 78 Grant Programs and Federal Title IV B. Access State of Alaska statutes and regulations at http://www.law.state.ak.us/doclibrary/doclib.html or through the contact person listed on the cover page of this RFP. Federal Title IV B information may be accessed at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/title-iv-b-subpart1-ssa%20 and http://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/pssf-title-iv-b-subpart-2-ssa

OCS provides services to children and families in abuse and/or neglect situations. The primary goal of OCS is to maintain a child in his or her parental home or to reunify the child with family as soon as is safely possible. OCS will move towards permanency for the child through adoption or legal guardianship in the event that all efforts to reunify the child with his/her family have been unsuccessful. Additionally, many children in Alaska have been adopted through private and international adoptions. In all cases, families that come to include children through adoption or guardianship face unique challenges in raising an adopted/guardianship child.

Children who are placed for adoption or guardianship from OCS often have a host of moderate to significant special needs. Special needs range from those arising with sexual and physical abuse, neglect, and/or domestic violence in the home to those associated with fetal alcohol spectrum disorders and other mental, physical and emotional disabilities. These special needs are generally life-long in nature and they change over time. For some children, new complexities of the special need will emerge as they grow older, making timely support services to adoptive or guardianship families even more critical. Obtaining services and supports for adopted or guardianship children and their families will likely be a lifelong process. For this reason, adoptive and guardianship families who are caring for children with special needs require post adoption/guardianship support services that will meet the evolving and complex special needs of the child. The availability of post-adoption may increase family ability and willingness to adopt from foster care.

This grant program will provide a seamless continuation of on-going support for adoptive and guardianship families upon the finalization of the adoption or guardianship, when the child's OCS case closes and there is no longer a case worker assigned to assist the family. The transition from the foster care system's high levels of supports to the self-sufficiency of an adoptive or guardian family can be difficult for the child and family alike. An adoptive or guardianship family may find themselves advocating on their own for the child in the community. State systems and services which provide assistance and care for adopted children are sometimes difficult for families to navigate, or are not available in certain areas. Support services are crucial to ensuring the continued success of families who have adopted. Although specific data on the number of failed private and international adoptions is unknown, it is known that in some instances these children enter the public welfare system. For this reason, support services are needed to help strengthen all post-adoptive/guardianship families, regardless of the how the adoption was finalized.

This program requires that post-adoption support services be delivered statewide, including to rural communities. The program requires the availability of culturally relevant and sensitive support services to adoptive/guardianship families of Alaska Native heritage. Homes of children of Alaska Native heritage need to be supported in culturally-appropriate ways to meet the lifelong cultural needs of the child, as well as any special needs.

1.02 Program Goals and Anticipated Outcomes

The proposed project must demonstrate a thorough understanding and must be clearly supportive of the grant program goals and outcomes anticipated by the Department. Services provided through this grant must result in measurable and achievable outcomes. These are changes which occur or differences made for individuals, groups families, organizations or communities during or after receiving post-adoption/guardianship services.

Under this grant program, the Department seeks support services for post-adoptive/guardianship families to ensure that children who achieve permanency through adoption or guardianship remain safely and permanently in their adoptive or guardianship home, and the child's evolving special needs can be addressed. Applicants must describe how services will be available in urban and rural communities, emphasizing the unique challenges that rural Alaska presents with culturally appropriate distance delivery of services for adoption support.

Grant Program Goals:

1. Promote the strengthening of the adoptive or guardian family through supporting the identified needs of the family.
2. Enhance community partnerships and parent engagement in the further development and provision of post-adoption/guardianship support.

Anticipated Outcomes:

1. Adoptive/guardianship families report an increased knowledge of the resources and assistance available in their community.
2. Increase in the number of families accessing post adoption/guardianship support services.
3. Increase in the number of referrals made to supportive services or relevant training provided in the community.

1.03 Program Services/Activities

Applicants must describe the proposed activities that support the goals and outcomes to be employed in the project. The applicant must also upload a timeline for initiating services and project activities. The timeline must contain the frequency of services and evaluation methods which will be used to guide service delivery throughout the first year of the grant. Applicants must also include at least one innovative service in their timeline as noted in this subsection. If staff has yet to be hired for the project, the timeline must outline the hiring of necessary staff members. Refer to subsection 2.02 for more information on Program Staffing Experience.

The following core services to be performed are essential to any provision of these services:

Toll Free Telephone Services

1. Maintain and staff a Toll free number for adoption/guardianship support.
2. Publish times of toll free number and services provided so that it is readily available to the target population.
3. Maintain a messaging service for when the number is not actively staffed.
4. Refer callers to Resource Family Training Services if they express interest in fostering or pursuing adoption.

Crisis Support, Referral and Advocacy

1. Provide individualized response to clients who are in crisis.
2. Actively refer families to providers serving the community in which the client resides.
3. Provide information, referral and individualized advocacy if necessary.

4. Assist clients in accessing appropriate resources to enhance family functioning and promote the stability of children in permanent homes.

Internet Page

1. Maintain a website for parents seeking post-permanency support, and information on topics such as attachment, trauma, grief and loss as they pertain to adoption and guardianship.
2. The website should include resources such as: information on existing support groups, information on starting support groups, resources available in local communities, training opportunities, instructions for accessing post-adoption resources, camps for adopted children or children with special needs, and other post-adoption resources as shared by the community and/or OCS.
3. The website should include links to programs within DHSS such as the Independent Living Program and Infant Learning Program, as well as links to the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC), other adoption information clearinghouses, and other sites and information as requested by OCS.
4. The website should list the grantee contact email address and toll-free number.

Support Groups and Networks

1. Maintain, publicize, and distribute materials to assist in the development and maintenance of support groups in order to enhance parents' ability to provide care for their adopted or guardian children and to promote family functioning.
2. Provide technical assistance to adoptive parents or organizations in the development and maintenance of support groups.
3. Projects planning to provide financial assistance or "mini grants" to support groups for supplies, materials or room rental, must outline these costs in the proposed budget.
4. Develop a communication system to promote peer support networks and parent engagement and leadership in support groups and networks.

Follow Up Services

1. Establish and maintain a process for follow up with families who have received post-adoption/guardianship services and document the outcome of follow up.

In addition to the core services, applicants must propose at least one innovative service. The applicant must include the choice of at least one innovative service in their timeline. Potential innovative service choices include the following:

Enhanced Linkages to Respite/Medical/Educational/Behavioral Health Resources

1. Develop and maintain resource information to assist families in accessing respite services and a range of treatment services.
2. Relay information about existing available resources, such as the Alaska Medicaid Coordinated Care Institute (AMCCI) or the Complex Behavioral Collaborative.
3. Participate in community/state efforts to increase the provision of services to adopted/guardianship children with special needs.
4. Provide educational advocacy by helping adoptive parents advocate with school districts for educational opportunities to meet adoptive children's needs, such as tutoring.
5. Produce annual report on innovative service provision and recommendations for enhancements to post-adoption/guardianship support services through the above efforts.

Increase Adoption Competency in Community Service Providers and Specific Training to Adoptive/Guardianship Parents

1. Provide adoption issues training to community partners having frequent contact with adoptive families, such as grant funded family support programs, educational systems and mental health providers.
2. Identify adoption-competent professionals in communities and coordinate support services and trainings.
3. Provide, locate, and/or arrange trainings identified as needed by adoptive/guardianship families and unavailable in their communities. Needs can be identified by family surveys or evaluations conducted in support groups or in the delivery of core services.
4. Produce annual report on innovative service provision and recommendations for enhancements to post-adoption/guardianship support service through the above efforts.

Prevention of Repeat Maltreatment (Anchorage and Fairbanks service area only)

1. Provide short term case management, no longer than 90 days, to link adoptive/guardianship families with supportive services, upon referral from OCS in Anchorage and Fairbanks only. Adoptive/guardianship families will be referred to post-adoption services by the assigned OCS worker. The grantee will contact each family to offer post-adoption services and make connections to services in the family's local community.
2. A narrative of the services offered and the family response will be provided to the local OCS Office if the family signs a release of information.
3. Produce annual report on innovative service provision and recommendations for enhancements to post-adoption/guardianship support service through the above efforts.

Other innovative services which meets the goals and description of the grant program and would benefit children and families post-adoption/guardianship are allowable.

- *The proposed innovative service must link to a goal or outcome of the post- adoption/guardianship support program, be well supported and be realistic and achievable within the fiscal year. At the conclusion of the fiscal year, OCS Program Staff will evaluate the innovated service to determine if it will be continued in the next fiscal year with or without modifications. Refer to 3.05 for the general conditions that are considered when making the decision to continue funding in subsequent fiscal years.*

1.04 Program Evaluation Requirements and Reporting

The applicant must use the SAS Evaluation Plan form provided in question 4.04 (4) to complete and upload their proposed evaluation plan. The applicant's evaluation plan must include indicators and data gathering strategies that will be used to evaluate the progress of the grant project toward achieving the program goals and outcomes.

Results Based Budgeting Framework

Grant programs will be required to align with the Department's priorities and core services. Utilizing a results based budgeting framework, grantees will use performance measures to evaluate progress in order to meet meaningful outcomes and initiate data collection and reporting consistent with Department priorities. Below are the Department Priorities, Core Services, Objectives, and Effective and Efficiency Performance Measures for this program.

Department Priorities

- 1 Health & Wellness Across the Life Span

- 3 Safe & Responsible Individuals, Families & Communities

Department Core Services

- 1.2 Provide Quality of Life in a Safe Living Environment for Alaskans
- 3.2 Protect Vulnerable Alaskans

Department Objectives

- 1.2.1. Improve the safety of children receiving department services
- 3.2.3. Improve client safety within department and provider operated facilities

Performance Measures of Effectiveness and Efficiency

- Effectiveness: Number of families accessing adoption support services.
- Efficiency: Cost to provide adoption support services per family.

Projects must meet or exceed anticipated minimum outcomes and performance measures described in this RFP.

Grant Reporting

Required reporting for this grant will include:

1) Cumulative Fiscal Report (overall grant and match expenditures are reported quarterly by budget line item);

2) Program Reports in the format prescribed by the grantor;

3) FFATA: Funding for this program includes federal funds with reporting requirements that include those imposed under the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA). An agency power user must complete a FFATA form in the GEMS Agency Administration tab. Federal reporting requirements are not limited to prime awardees (such as the State) but include awards with federal funds that the State grants out (sub awardee).

1.05 Target Population and Service Area

Applicants must clearly describe the population targeted by the project, including the area or communities that will be served. Proposals will be evaluated for compatibility with the intended target population identified in this solicitation.

Target Population: The target population for the services requested in this solicitation includes all post-adoptive/guardianship families residing in the State of Alaska. The project will provide services for adoption support to all adoptive/guardianship families referred, whether self-referred, referred by community providers or OCS staff.

Service Areas and Communities: The service areas and communities requested in this solicitation include all areas statewide. It is the intent of OCS to fund a single applicant to provide services statewide. Statewide delivery shall be balanced between Alaska's urban and rural service needs.

1.06 Program Funding

It is the intent of OCS to fund a single applicant to provide services statewide. Funds available for this program are

anticipated to total $250,000 per fiscal year ($162,500 in Federal funds and $87,500 in General Fund Match).

Match Requirements: The budget must include matching funds to equal no less than 15% of the proposed project. To calculate required match use the following formula.

Total Grant Award Amount x Percentage of Match = Total Proposed Match

Restrictions to allowable matching funds are as follows:

1) Federal grant funds may not be used to match federal funds awarded through this grant program.

2) State grant funds may not be used to match funds awarded through this grant program.

3) Grant Income, Medicaid, and other third party receipts may be used as a match.

4) Local match may include in-kind contributions from volunteers, as well as donations of supplies, equipment, and space, and other items of value for which the applicant does not incur a cost.

5) Local cash match may include local tax receipts, municipal revenue sharing, cash donations, and other local sources of cash receipts.

Proposed Budget: The applicant must submit both a detailed and narrative budget for the first fiscal year of the grant, including any required match, which is fully compliant with the limitations described in 7 AAC 78.160 (Costs), and supports program staffing and service delivery requirements stated in this RFP. The GEMS portal provides applicants instructions and the ability to enter budget details and narrative for the project budget. More detailed instructions can be accessed in the DHSS Budget Guidelines available online at https://gems.dhss.alaska.gov/Home/Documents.

Indirect Costs: If the proposed budget includes indirect costs, 7 AAC 78.160(p) requires a copy of the agency's current federally approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. Agencies with current DHSS grant agreements can review the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement information in GEMS. Agencies without current grant agreements with the Department must upload a copy of the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement in the "Agency Administration" tab of the GEMS portal. Help instructions are available in the portal to upload and review such documents.

Grant Income: DHSS is the payer of last resort. If applicable to the services provided under this agreement, the grantee will have a Medicaid Provider Number, or apply to obtain one, and will make reasonable effort to bill all eligible services to Medicaid or any other available sources of payment before seeking payment through this grant agreement.

In the applicant's proposed budget, both anticipated receipts and expenditures for all grant income must be clearly evident in both the detailed and narrative budgets and actual receipts and expenditures must be reported on a quarterly basis.

Section 2 Applicant Qualifications

2.01 Required Experience

Proposal evaluation will include consideration of the applicant's history of compliance with service and grant

requirements, and previous experience in providing the same or similar services, which may include evaluation of site reviews/program audits and the successful resolution of any findings. If the applicant is not a current or prior year grantee of DHSS or this program, the applicant must upload references and documentation of the successful delivery of similar services.

The applicant must describe previous experience providing same or similar services to those being proposed and/or experience working with families, which may include foster, kinship care, or adoptive and guardianship families. The description must clearly identify the time period over which services were provided, the communities where services were provided and the target population that was served.

2.02 Program Staffing Experience

Program staffing levels must be commensurate with meeting the program goals, anticipated outcomes, and activities/strategies for service delivery appropriate to the proposed project. Applicants must describe proposed staffing patterns for the delivery of project services for adoption support on a statewide basis.

Resumes, job descriptions, and professional credentials must be uploaded for key project personnel.

If staff has yet to be determined/hired for the project, detailed position descriptions are to be included. As stated in subsection 1.03, the applicant's timeline must outline the hiring of necessary staff members.

2.03 Administrative, Management and Facility Requirements

The applicant must demonstrate the agency's ability to responsibly administer the grant, including both sustainable fiscal and administrative capability necessary to support the project.

1) The applicant will ensure procedures are in place to protect client confidentiality. These procedures must meet State and Federal standards.

2) The applicant will ensure their most recent financial audit has been submitted to the appropriate state office (see audit section below) and any audit findings identified in that audit have been resolved.

3) Executive administrative and financial staff must be qualified, as indicated by their professional and educational experience detailed in attached resumes.

Successful grant applicants will be required to submit additional agency information with submission of their signed grant agreement, if that information is not current and already on file with DHSS, Grants and Contracts.

Audit Requirements:

Federal Requirements: Effective immediately, if you expend $750,000 or more total Federal Financial Assistance in your fiscal year, you may be required to comply with conditions of the Single Audit Act of 1984, P.L. 98-502, as amended by the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996, P.L. 104-156, and defined in 2 CFR 200.

State Requirements Chapter 045 Grant Administration**:** For audit periods that begin or continue on after March 31, 2008, if you expend $500,000 or more total State Financial Assistance in your agency's fiscal year, you are required to comply with the conditions of Alaska Administrative Code, 2 AAC 45.010-090. The current regulations may be viewed at the State of Alaska, Department of Law website, http://www.law.state.ak.us/doclibrary/doclib.html or

copies may be obtained from the State agency issuing the solicitation to which this statement is attached.

Information on compliance with the State and Federal Single Audit Acts may be obtained from, and audits completed in compliance with the Acts must be submitted to:

State Single Audit Coordinator
Department of Administration
Division of Finance
P.O. Box110204
Juneau, AK 99811-0204
Telephone: (907) 465-4666
Fax: (907) 465-2169

DHSS Program Audit Requirements: All DHSS grantees are subject to the requirements of 7 AAC 78.230, and if an audit under 2 AAC 45.010 has not been conducted and submitted to the State Single Audit Coordinator, the grantee must ensure that a fiscal audit of the grantee's operations under the grant program is performed by an independent certified public accountant at least once every two years and submitted to:

State of Alaska
Department of Health and Social Services
Finance and Management Services
Audit Section
P.O. Box110602
Juneau, AK 99811-0602
Telephone: (907) 465-3120

Facility(ies)/Safety and Service Access:

1) The applicant must address potential safety concerns for both clients and staff in the management of services proposed in response to this RFP.

2) The applicant should describe how access is provided to clients and how that will enhance the success of the project.

3) All applicants for DHSS grants should have an emergency response and recovery plan for the safe evacuation of clients and staff, and that provides for other potential safety concerns. This plan is mandatory for grantees providing residential and/or critical care services (see DHSS Grant Assurances).

2.04 Support/Coordination of Services

Applicants must be able to demonstrate the proposed project has the necessary support and coordination for the successful delivery of services. The applicant must upload documentation that addresses community support, partnerships and collaborations specific to the proposed project. Documentation may include Memorandum of Agreement's or letters of support.

Section 3 General Instructions for Proposal Submission

3.01 Eligibility (Who May Apply)

Applicants must be eligible to apply under 7 AAC 78.030 (Eligible Applicants). They include nonprofit organizations; municipalities and Regional Educational Attendance Areas or other political subdivisions of the state; other State agencies; and Alaska Native Tribes. The following documentation of eligibility is required for Nonprofit Corporations or Alaska Native Tribal applicants:

1. **A Nonprofit Corporation or a Nonprofit Subsidiary of a Nonprofit Corporation.** The agency must be listed on the United States Internal Revenue Service's most recent register of Tax-exempt organizations, or provide a copy of the organization's current State of Alaska Certificate of Incorporation clearly establishing nonprofit status. Nonprofit subsidiaries must also submit a letter from the parent organization confirming nonprofit status;
2. **An Alaska Native entity as defined in 7 AAC 78.950(1).** The entity must submit with their application a legally binding resolution waiving the entity's sovereign immunity to suit, using the template provided. This form is designed to encompass the multi-year grant duration period identified in subsection 3.05. To be eligible for consideration, the resolution must include authorization compliant with the tribe's constitution:
    i. Federally recognized tribes for which the tribal constitution grants authority to the tribal council to waive sovereign immunity and enter into a grant agreement on behalf of the tribe.
    ii. Federally recognized tribes for which the tribal constitution requires a majority vote of the tribal membership to waive sovereign immunity and enter into a grant agreement.

Applicants must also submit in GEMS, or have on file with DHSS, a valid State of Alaska business license and a current governing board member list with titles, contact information, and terms of office. The list must include emergency contact information outside the applicant agency for one or more responsible officers of the governing board.

Applicants who have a previous contract or grant to help write this current RFP will be precluded from submitting a proposal unless a written statement of refusal of the contract or grant funds is attached. Proposals submitted without this statement shall be deemed non-responsive.

3.02 Acceptance of Terms

By submitting a proposal, an applicant accepts all terms and conditions of this Request for Proposals including all attachments and guidelines identified herein; 7 AAC 78 and any other applicable statutes and regulations. Copies of these may be accessed through the contact person listed on the cover page, or through the web address(es) identified in this RFP.

If a grant is awarded, this RFP and the applicant's proposal become part of the grant agreement. The applicant will be bound by the provisions contained in their proposal, unless the Department agrees that specific parts of the proposal are not part of the agreement.

Proposals and other materials submitted in response to this RFP become the property of the State and may be returned only if the State allows. Proposals are public documents and may be inspected or copied by anyone after grants have been awarded.

3.03 Inquiries

Applicants should immediately review this Request for Proposals for defects and questionable or confusing content. Questions about the RFP that can be answered by directing the applicant to a specific section in the RFP may be

answered verbally by the Contact Person in the cover page. Questions that cannot be answered by directing an applicant to a specific section of the RFP may be declared to be of a substantive nature. The applicant will be directed to state the question in writing. Questions of a substantive nature must be received, in writing, at the email address listed on the cover page of this RFP, no less than ten days before the deadline for receipt of proposals (see the Deadline for Written Inquiries on the cover page of this RFP). This will allow issuance of any necessary amendments to all prospective applicants. **(Please note: Technical assistance will not be available after 4:00 PM AKST the day of the proposal deadline.)**

Applicants are responsible for monitoring the State's Online Public Notice website located at: http://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/ for any subsequent clarifications or amendments that may be issued regarding this solicitation.

3.04 Proposal Costs and Content

The Department will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by the grantee prior to the authorized grant performance period. All costs of responding to this RFP are the responsibility of the applicant.

The applicant is responsible for the content of the proposal.

3.05 Duration of Grant

This RFP is for a one year period, beginning 7/1/2017 through 6/30/2018. At the discretion of the Department, a project funded under this RFP may be considered for continued funding in subsequent program fiscal years 2019, 2020 and 2021. The decision to continue funding for the subsequent years of the four-year grant cycle is based on the following general conditions:

1. the Department's judgment that there is a continued need for the grant project service;
2. the grantee's satisfactory performance during the previous grant year;
3. the availability of sufficient grant program funds, and whether continuation of the financing is consistent with public health and welfare; and
4. the ability of the grantee and the Department to agree on any adjustments in payments or service.

Applicants will submit a budget for year one of the grant only. Funding in the subsequent years will require submission and approval of documents needed to update service plans, evaluation measures and budgets. Grantees will be notified by Grants and Contracts of specific submission requirements necessary to qualify for consideration of continued funding.

3.06 Proposal Review

Following the deadline for receipt of proposals, DHSS staff will verify all submission requirements have been met. No amendments or corrections will be accepted after the deadline unless they are in response to a request from the contact person named in this RFP. Proposals will be reviewed as follows:

1. Proposals will be evaluated in a manner that will **avoid disclosure of contents to competing offerors** before notice of grant award has been issued.
2. DHSS staff will evaluate each grant proposal for minimum responsiveness and other technical requirements, and eliminate nonresponsive proposals from consideration.

3. Using the criteria set out in this RFP and 7 AAC 78.100 (Criteria for Review of Proposals), DHSS staff will evaluate each responsive proposal. Scores will be assigned based on the applicant's response to each individual question and the associated criteria. **Applicants will not earn points for a given question based on a response to another question in the RFP**. DHSS staff will also review relevant documentation and information regarding the applicant that is available to the department. Recommendations regarding whether each proposal should be financed, and at what level, will include consideration of the following:
    i. a history of the applicant's compliance with grant requirements, to include records of program performance, on-site program reviews, and prior year audits;
    ii. priorities in applicable State health and social services plans;
    iii. requirements of applicable State and federal statutes; and
    iv. municipal ordinances or regulations applicable to the grant program.

If there are multiple responsive proposals for which there is insufficient money to fully fund, or supplementary expertise is deemed necessary to the review of proposed services, the Department may appoint a Proposal Evaluation Committee (PEC) as an additional advisory body. PEC members will initially evaluate proposals, independently of other committee members. Then as a committee, they will meet in a **closed session** (7 AAC 78.090 Review of Proposals) to further review proposals and develop recommendations. Scores will be assigned based on the applicant's response to each individual question and the associated criteria. **Applicants will not earn points for a given question based on a response to another question in the RFP**. The PEC will include in their review discussion of each proposal's merits. Recommendations will include approval or disapproval for award, modifications to the proposed project, special compliance conditions, and ranking proposals in priority order.

All advisory recommendations, including staff recommendations, and if applicable the recommendations of the Proposal Evaluation Committee, as well as all other review materials will be submitted for consideration by the Director of the Division, who will make recommendations to the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Social Services or the Commissioner's designee.

3.07 Final Decision Authority

Recommendations, including those from any PEC that may be held, are advisory only, the final decision whether to approve or disapprove grant award, the amount of each award, and whether to impose special conditions or modifications rests with the Commissioner or Commissioner's designee.

PLEASE NOTE: The final decision may include additional considerations, such as the lack of or duplication of services in certain locations, or alternative services that may be available; a critical need for services by vulnerable populations; and matters of health, life and safety. *The Department has the responsibility to ensure public monies are utilized in a manner that protects the interests of the people of the State and retains the right to make final awards that ensure responsible distribution of grant funds.*

3.08 Notification of Grant Award and Appeals

Within fifteen (15) days after the decision regarding grant awards, the applicant will be notified of the final funding decision, and any conditions of award or modifications. Following any necessary negotiations for revisions to the proposed budget and scope of services, applicants will be issued a grant agreement. This formal agreement will contain specific performance and reporting requirements consistent with Department policy and procedure and 7 AAC 78.

Per 7 AAC 78.305 (Request for Appeal), an applicant may appeal a final grant award decision. Requests for hearing must be addressed to the Commissioner, and received in writing at the address below, within 15 days after the applicant receives notification of the decision. The request must contain the reasons for the appeal and must cite the law, regulation, or terms of the grant upon which the appeal is based.

Send appeal to:

Valerie Davidson, Commissioner
Department of Health & Social Services
P.O. Box110601
Juneau, AK 99811-0601

with a **copy** to the Grants Administrator named on the cover page.

3.09 Cancellation of the RFP/Termination of Award

Contingent upon funding appropriations and the Governor's approval, the Department may fund proposals from eligible applicants. DHSS may withdraw this competitive Request for Proposals at any time and reserves the right to refrain from making an award when such action is deemed to be in the best interest of the State. Funds awarded for a grant as a result of this RFP may be withheld and the grant terminated by written notice from the grantor to the grantee at any time for violation by the grantee of any terms or conditions of the grant award, or when such action is deemed by the grantor to be in the best interest of the State.

Section 4 Submission Requirements/Criteria for Proposal

4.01 Minimum Responsiveness Criteria per 78.100(2)(a)

Proposals that fail to meet the minimum responsiveness requirements below will be eliminated from consideration per 7 AAC 78.090(b)(2).

1 Applicant is eligible per 7 AAC 78.030.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	Applicant is eligible per 7 AAC 78.030.	☑	

4.02 Other Technical Requirements per 7 AAC 78.060, 78.090(b) and 78.100

Response & Organizational Documentation

1 If applying as a non-profit organization, please verify the following criteria pertaining to non-profit status.

Evaluation/Review Criteria	Review	Points

a	The agency must be listed on the State's non-profit corporation database "in good standing." The link to the database is http://commerce.alaska.gov/CBP/Main/CBPLSearch.aspx?mode=Corp; **and/or**	☑	
b	The agency is listed on the federal tax exempt site indicating current 501(c)3 status. The link to the database is http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Exempt-Organizations-Select-Check.	☑	
c	If the agency is a non-profit subsidiary, a verifying letter from the parent non-profit agency must be uploaded to the applicant's agency record in GEMS. The parent corporation must meet criteria a and/or b.	☑	

2 If applying as a Federally recognized tribal entity, please verify the following criteria.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	A correct Waiver of Sovereign Immunity is included as an attachment to the proposal and indicates the correct fiscal years and duration of the solicitation.	☑	
b	The tribe is listed on the Federal Register as an Alaska Native entity recognized & eligible to receive services from the U.S. BIA http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-01-14/pdf/2015-00509.pdf.	☑	

3 If applying as a government entity, please ensure the following criterion is met.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The agency is either another State Agency, such as the University; an incorporated municipality (verify at http://commerce.alaska.gov/dcra/DCRAExternal/community); or an REAA under AS 14.08.031 (verify at http://education.alaska.gov/facilities/pdf/doe2013map.pdf).	☑	

4 Please sign the DHSS State Assurance form.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	DHSS State Assurance form is completed, signed and dated by a person authorized to enter into legal agreements on behalf of the applicant.	☑	

5 Verify the applicable criteria below are met if the program is federally funded.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The Federal Assurance and Certification form is completed, signed, and dated by a person authorized to enter into legal agreements on behalf of the applicant.	☑	
b	The applicant's agency record in GEMS contains the required Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) information and is complete.	☑	

6 Please ensure the following information is uploaded to the applicant's agency record in GEMS.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The applicant's agency record in GEMS contains a current governing board member list with contact information.	☑	
b	The applicant's agency record in GEMS contains all other agency funding information received and applied for, including state and federal grants.	☑	
c	The applicant's agency record in GEMS contains a valid State of Alaska business license number (verify at https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/cbp/Main/CBPLSearch.aspx?mode=BL).	☑	

7 Please ensure the current approved Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement is attached to the applicant's agency record in GEMS, if applicable.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The applicant's agency record in GEMS contains a current approved Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.	☑	
b	If the Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement is expired, verify there is written confirmation from the cognizant federal agency they are accepting the most recent rate until a new agreement is approved.	☑	

4.03 History of Compliance with Grant Requirements per 7 AAC 78.100(2)(B)

1 Verify the following criteria pertaining to past performance and history of compliance are met. If the applicant is not a current or prior year grantee of DHSS or this program, upload references and documentation of the successful delivery of similar services. All references and documentation should be scanned and uploaded as a single document.

Evaluation/Review Criteria	Review	Points

a	Prior year(s) reporting is complete and timely (includes fiscal, narrative and data reporting).	☑	
b	Required audits have been submitted (verify at http://doa.alaska.gov/dof/ssa/ssainfo.html). Prior year audit exceptions, if any, are resolved (verify by contacting the Finance Management Services audit section at http://dhss.alaska.gov/fms/Pages/Audit.aspx).	☑	
c	Prior year(s) activities demonstrate effective delivery of services. Review could include tangible documentation such as prior year performance reports, audit reports, site visits, etc.	☑	
d	Program historically maintains required standards as demonstrated in quality assurance reviews, licensing or certification standards, etc.	☑	
e	If the applicant is not a current or prior year grantee of DHSS or this program, the uploaded references and documentation demonstrate the successful delivery of similar services.	☑	

4.04 Questions and Criteria related to Program Policy, Goals, Outcomes, and Activities

1 ***In the text box below, describe your project and how the program goals and anticipated outcomes stated in this RFP will be achieved by the proposed project. The description must include how services will be available in both urban and rural communities, emphasizing the unique challenge that rural Alaska presents with the distance delivery of services for adoption support in a culturally appropriate manner.***

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The applicant's description demonstrates a thorough understanding of program goals and outcomes, and it is clear how the proposed project will achieve that intent.	☐	20
b	The applicant's description addresses how services will be available in both urban and rural communities and an understanding of the challenges rural Alaska presents with the distance delivery of services in a culturally appropriate manner.	☐	20

2 In the text box below, describe the proposed activities that will be performed as a part of this program. The description must address how your project will incorporate the five core services and at least one innovative service in the provision of SAS services (see subsection 1.03). The innovative service must link to a goal or outcome of the post-adoption/guardianship support program.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The described activities are well developed, reasonable, support program intent and address how the project will incorporate the five core services in the provision of services.	☐	20
b	The description clearly identifies the activities for at least one innovative service and demonstrates how the innovative service links to a goal or outcome of the post-adoption/guardianship support program.	☐	20

3 In the document upload field below, attach a timeline for initiating services and project activities in year one. The timeline must contain the frequency of services and evaluation methods which will be used to guide service delivery. Applicants must also include at least one innovative service proposed by their agency. If staff has yet to be hired for the project, the timeline must also outline the hiring of necessary staff members.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	A timeline for initiating services and project activities is attached, is compatible with program intent and outlines the frequency of services and evaluation methods to be used to guide service delivery, at least one innovative service and, if applicable, hiring of necessary staff members.	☐	20

4 Using the SAS Evaluation Plan template, complete and upload the project evaluation plan. Include indicators and data gathering strategies that will be implemented to address the Department's performance measures for Results Based Budgeting.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The applicant's evaluation plan includes indicators and data gathering strategies designed to provide the data needed to report the project's progress in meeting the Department's performance measures for this program and is achievable.	☐	20

5 In the text box below, describe the target population and service location(s) of the proposed project.

Evaluation/Review Criteria	Review	Points

a	The description of the target population, and service area are clearly identified, and meet the intent of the RFP.	☐	20

6 Provide the proposed budget for the project, including narrative, details, and matching funds availability. Verify the following criteria are met.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		**Review**	**Points**
a	The budget narrative and budget detail are complete and mutually consistent.	☑	
b	Cost line items are for allowable costs under 7 AAC 78.160, and are compliant with program requirements. Projects planning to provide financial assistance or "mini-grants" to support groups have outlined costs in the proposed budget.	☑	
c	Travel costs are consistent with 7 AAC 78.160(h) and (i), and with any requirements or limitations imposed by the program.	☑	
d	Equipment and Subcontract costs are allowed by the program and consistent with 7 AAC 78.280.	☑	
e	The Indirect cost line item in the budget is compliant with the Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement "specific" rates and exemptions applicable to the cost.	☑	
f	The budget supports the proposed project and program intent, and the project appears achievable with demonstrated resources.	☐	10
g	Costs are reasonable and well supported in the budget narrative.	☐	5
h	Budget Detail(s) and Narrative support any necessary allocation of resources among target populations or service locations.	☐	5
i	Required match is met with both the source of funds and planned expenditures evident in the detail and fully described in the narrative. If applicable, a project funded by multiple sources has disclosed the overall resources in the appropriate field(s).	☐	5

4.05 Applicant Qualifications - Criteria Relating to Personnel, Management and Facilities

1 In the text box below, describe the previous experience that your agency has in providing services similar to those being proposed and/or experience working with families or foster/kinship care/ adoptive/guardianship families. Clearly identify the time period over which services were provided and the target population that was served.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The applicant's description of previous experience providing the same or similar services demonstrates the skills and capacity needed to provide program services. Note: In addition to this criteria, DHSS staff will have access to tangible documentation such as prior year performance reports, audit reports, site visits, etc. as noted in Subsection 4.03.	☐	15

2 In the text box below, describe the program and administrative staffing needed for the proposed project. In the document upload field below, scan and attach as a single document the position descriptions for key project personnel. If those positions are filled, include resumes and professional credentials. Also include resumes for administrative staff who will provide supervision, fiscal, reporting, and management needs.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	Staff providing services are qualified and competent as demonstrated by the necessary attached professional credential(s) and resume(s).	☐	30
b	Staffing levels are compliant with the program mandates and sufficient to support the requirements of the proposed project.	☐	20
c	Position descriptions support the intent of the RFP and the applicant's proposed project.	☐	15
d	Administrative staff are qualified as demonstrated by attached resume(s).	☐	20
e	Administrative capacity demonstrates capability to meet reporting and management needs.	☐	20

3 In the text box below, describe the procedures that will be used to protect client confidentiality.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The applicant's description adequately addresses the necessary procedures to protect client confidentiality and meet State and Federal standards.	☐	25

4 In the text box below, describe the facilities and location(s) where services will be provided and how that will enhance the success of the project.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The facilities described are safe and appropriate to the purpose of the program; and the location(s) will enhance access to services by the proposed target population.	☐	30

4.06 Demonstration of Support/Involvement of Service

1 In the document upload field below, scan and attach as a single document tangible evidence of community support, partnerships or collaborations specific to this project.

Evaluation/Review Criteria		Review	Points
a	The applicant has uploaded tangible evidence of community support, partnerships or collaborations necessary for the effective delivery of services.	☐	20