

**Region V Systems
Intent to Negotiate:
Request for Qualifications
for the
Youth and Family Crisis Response Center**

Release Date:	Monday, September 11, 2023 www.region5systems.net	Contact: Renee' Dozier 402-441-3801 rdozier@region5systems.net
Submittal Deadline:	Friday, October 20, 2023 No later than 4:00 p.m. To: Region V Systems 1645 'N' Street Lincoln, NE 68508	Submission by fax or telephone is not permitted.

Region V Systems is pleased to announce the release of a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for entities interested in developing and operating a Youth and Family Crisis Response Center. This RFQ is part of the Intent to Negotiate (ITN) process, coordinated by Region V Systems, to select a qualified provider.

The “*Request for Qualifications Application Form*” can be found at www.region5systems.net. Applicants should submit the Request for Qualifications Application Form in the following formats by Monday, September 18, 2023, no later than 4:00 pm:

- Electronically to the Region V Systems Network Management Team at networkmanagement@region5systems.net
- One (1) original and ten (10) copies of the application sent or delivered to:

Region V Systems
1645 N Street
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508
Attn: Rene' Dozier

Region V Systems (RVS) reserves the right to request clarification or additional information from any applicant. This solicitation does not obligate RVS to award a contract to any applicant. RVS, at its option, reserves the right to waive as informality any irregularities in and/or reject any or all applications.

All questions regarding this RFQ should be made in writing to Region V Systems Network Management Team and emailed to networkmanagement@region5systems.net. Questions and responses will be posted on the Region V Systems website (www.region5systems.net). All notices, decisions, documents, and other matters relating to the RFQ process will be electronically posted on RVS' website at www.region5systems.net. RVS reserves the right to amend, modify, supplement, or clarify this RFQ at any time at its sole discretion.

Under the parameters of the Intent to Negotiate (ITN) process coordinated by Region V Systems, with the exception of clarifying questions, prospective respondents are prohibited from contacting personnel of Region V Systems (RVS), the RVS Behavioral Health Advisory Committee, the RVS Regional Governing Board, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, personnel of Lancaster County, or members of the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners regarding this solicitation during the period following the release of this RFQ, after the release of available funding amounts, during the proposal evaluation period, and until a determination is made and announced regarding an invitation to submit further information. Violation of these provisions may be grounds for rejecting a reply to this RFQ.

Note: No applicant shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, subject to discrimination under, or denied employment in the administration of or in connection with this RFQ because of race, color, creed, marital status, familial status, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, Vietnam era or disabled veteran's status, age, or disability. The applicant shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local nondiscrimination laws, regulations, and policies.

Introduction

The Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services, division of Behavioral Health (DBH) is designated by federal and state law as the state's single authority for mental health and substance use disorders. DBH directs the administration and coordination of the public behavioral health system.

Nebraska is split into six behavioral health "regions." Nebraska Revised Statute §71-809 indicates that each of the six Regional Behavioral Health Authorities (RBHAs) is responsible for the development and coordination of publicly funded behavioral health services within their behavioral health region pursuant to rules and regulations adopted and promulgated by DBH, including, but not limited to:

- Administration and management of the regional behavioral health authority;
- Integration and coordination of the public behavioral health system within the behavioral health region;
- Comprehensive planning for the provision of an appropriate array of community-based behavioral health services and continuum of care for the region;
- Submission for approval by the division of an annual budget and a proposed plan for the funding and administration of publicly funded behavioral health services within the region;
- Submission of annual reports and other reports as required by the division,
- Initiation and oversight of contracts for the provision of publicly funded behavioral health services; and
- Coordination with the division in conducting audits of publicly funded behavioral health programs and services.

The Regional Behavioral Health Authorities (RBHA) are the regional administrative entity responsible for development and coordination of a network of publicly funded providers within each RBHA.

Region V Systems

As one of Nebraska's six RBHAs, Region V Systems was originally created by state statute in 1974 as a quasi-governmental entity with the responsibility of coordinating and overseeing the delivery of publicly funded mental health services for the 16 counties making up the Region V geographical area. Two years later, the Legislature added responsibility to each of the six regions for the development and coordination of substance abuse services. In 2004, LB 1083 (the Behavioral Health Services Act) was passed, repealing the original statutes but re-establishing and renaming the regions as "Behavioral Health Authorities." These Behavioral Health Authorities make up *Nebraska's public behavioral health system*.

The mission of Region V Systems is to encourage and support the provision of a full range of mental health, alcoholism, and drug abuse programs and services to the youth and adults of Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Lancaster, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Seward, Thayer, and York counties in Nebraska. Our focus is to promote comprehensive partnerships in behavioral health.

Region V Systems is governed by a board of county commissioners, who are elected officials, one (1) from each of the counties represented in RVS' geographic area. The Regional Governing Board (RGB) is under contract with the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, the designated authority for administration of mental health and substance abuse programs for the state.

The RGB appoints a Regional Administrator to be the chief executive officer responsible to the RGB. The RGB also appoints an advisory committee for the purpose of advising the RGB regarding the provision of coordinated and comprehensive behavioral health services within the Region V Systems service area to best meet the needs of the general public. The Region V Systems Behavioral Health Advisory Committee (BHAC) is comprised of 15-20 members including consumers, concerned citizens, and representatives from other community systems.

Input from Stakeholders and Consumers

In 2020, upon the ending of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) System of Care grant, Region V Systems, in partnership with the Nebraska Public Policy Center, held focus groups with community stakeholders, inclusive of youth and their families, to generate feedback on how well the youth System of Care performed. Through this effort, stakeholders prioritized crisis services and supports as a gap in the System of Care. The stakeholders also identified the following needs for the crisis continuum of care: 1) Access to mobile crisis response (not law enforcement activated), 2) A non-threatening place for youth and families in crisis “to go” to receive “help” to meet their crisis needs, and 3) Family/peer support services provided by individuals with lived experience to assist with systems navigation.

Region V Systems’ management team facilitated planning sessions during July 2021 with a diverse group of stakeholders to identify the gaps/needs in our youth and adult regional behavioral health System of Care. In response, the following were identified as gaps and needs for the youth System of Care:

- A place (crisis center) where families can receive support when in crisis - open 24 hours/7-days a week.
- Services/supports for youth in a behavioral health crisis who are not admitted into an acute psychiatric setting.
- Planning and support for families in crisis.
- Respite services - A place where youth can go.

Lancaster County Human Services partnered with the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center (2019) and the RFK National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice (2022) to bring together key community partners to facilitate planning sessions with the goal of identifying the support needs of our community. The RFK representatives were also provided with information collected from the various gaps and needs activities previously conducted and referenced above. The RFK representatives recommended that the various systems and community partners be brought together in our System of Care planning efforts as there were common gaps and needs identified across systems.

Region V Systems analyzed the results of the planning sessions and created a matrix identifying the needs/gaps in our system, current services, infrastructure, community response to meet these needs, areas identified as a priority and current/potential fund sources. This process identified the need for additional behavioral health crisis services, including a “place to go” to provide an alternative to contacting law enforcement or taking youth to an emergency department.

Statement of Purpose

Region V Systems and Lancaster County have partnered on a project to identify a service provider who will develop and operate the Youth and Family Crisis Response Center, and to purchase lands and develop facilities to meet a service for a “crisis place to go” within the behavioral health crisis continuum of care. The Youth and Family Crisis Response Center will be located in Lincoln, Nebraska and will be accessible and available to youth and their families from the 16 counties that comprise the service area for Region V Systems (Butler, Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Lancaster, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Polk, Richardson, Saline, Saunders, Seward, Thayer, and York). This Youth and Family Crisis Response Center will be integrated into the existing crisis continuum available within the Region V Systems service area, including the 988 Call Center operated by Boys Town and the mobile crisis response

teams. SAMHSA informally refers to these services as Someone to Talk To, Someone to Respond, and A Safe Place to Be. The shared goal of these services is to help youth remain in their home and connect them with community-based supports as quickly as possible.

Target Population

The target population for the facility is youth (aged 18 and under) who are experiencing a behavioral health crisis and their family/caregivers.

Scope of Service

The Youth and Family Crisis Response Center will be available 24 hours per day, seven days per week, 365 days per year to provide de-escalation and stabilization services for youth (aged 18 and younger) experiencing a behavioral health crisis and to also meet the needs of their families/caregivers in order for the youth to remain in their home/living environment.

A recovery-oriented approach to crisis focuses on promoting recovery, resiliency, respect, and empowerment for people with lived experience. It is a person-centered approach that involves working with the youth in crisis to reduce risk to themselves and others, instead of treating the youth in crisis as if they are a risk. The selected provider will be expected to integrate and coordinate four services (Crisis Response, Outpatient Crisis Psychotherapy, Mental Health Respite, and Emergency Community Support) to meet the varied needs of the youth and their families/caregivers. As the intensity and needs of the youth and their families/caregivers will vary, not all four of these services must be provided in every situation. It will be crucial for the selected provider to develop a seamless service approach.

It is anticipated that Crisis Response services will be the initial intervention provided to youth and their families/caregivers when they present in behavioral health crisis at the Youth and Family Crisis Response Center. All of the following admission guidelines must be met for admission into Crisis Response:

- Based on current information, the youth requires further evaluation to determine service needs.
- The youth exhibits active symptomology consistent with current diagnoses from the current edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM).
- The youth exhibits potential for risk of harm to self or others if support is not provided.
- The youth is at risk of being placed in Emergency Protective Custody and/or hospitalized if support is not provided.

When necessary and appropriate, Outpatient Crisis Psychotherapy sessions may be provided in person or via secure Telehealth. All of the following admission guidelines must be met for admission into this service:

- The youth demonstrates symptomology consistent with a DSM (current edition) diagnosis which requires and can reasonably be expected to respond to therapeutic intervention.
- Presenting behavioral, psychological, and/or biological dysfunction and functional impairment are consistent and associated with the DSM (current edition) and/or reports a precipitating event.

The selected provider will operate a four-bed Mental Health Respite program at the Youth and Family Crisis Response Center. When necessary and appropriate, youth may remain in the Mental Health Respite program for up to five days. Youth must meet all of the following guidelines to be admitted into the Mental Health Respite program:

- Has a current diagnosis of a serious emotional disturbance.
- At risk of needing a higher level of care if support is not provided.

Emergency Community Support services may be provided to those youth and families/caregivers in need of a high level of support post-crisis. Such support includes case management, behavioral health referrals, assistance with daily living skills, and coordination among the youth, families/caregivers, formal and informal support services, and behavioral providers. All of the following admission guidelines must be met for admission into Emergency Community Support:

- Youth is currently experiencing a behavioral health crisis.
- The youth is at risk of needing a higher level of care if support is not provided.
- Youth demonstrates a need for support in coordinating treatment/recovery/rehabilitation options in the community.

In addition to the service eligibility noted above, verification of lawful presence in the United States and verification of financial eligibility must be completed for youth to receive Crisis Outpatient Psychotherapy, Mental Health Respite, and Emergency Community Support services. The selected provider will utilize the appropriate sliding fee schedules for these services to identify whether a copayment will be required.

Information on utilization guidelines is contained within the Nebraska Continuum of Care Manual for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Behavioral Health. At the time this RFQ was issued, the full Nebraska Continuum of Care Manual for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders was available on this webpage: <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Behavioral-Health.aspx>.

Financial Specifications

Total Region V Systems Funds Available

The annual allocation available for a twelve-month period/Region fiscal year (July 1-June 30) is specified below:

Project	RVS Available Funds
Youth and Family Crisis Response Center	\$1,150,000.00

STATE GENERAL FUNDING: The contract amount includes funds contracted to RVS by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. Funds are passed through the Regional Behavioral Health Authority (RBHA), RVS, and subsequently passed from the RBHA to the Network Providers.

FEDERAL BLOCK GRANT FUNDING: The contract amount includes funds contracted to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services by the Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS). Funds are passed through to the RBHA and subsequently passed through from the RBHA to the Network.

Services are reimbursed as follows:

NON-FEE FOR SERVICE (NFFS): Crisis Response, Emergency Community Support, and Mental Health Respite services will be reimbursed on an expense reimbursement basis.

FEE FOR SERVICE (FFS): Crisis Outpatient Psychotherapy sessions will be reimbursed at the Division of Behavioral Health statewide rate for all youth who meet service eligibility, financial eligibility, and verification of lawful presence requirements. The provider selected to operate the Youth and Family Crisis Response Center shall be enrolled with Nebraska Medicaid and contracted with all Medicaid Managed Care Organizations as a provider for Crisis Psychotherapy services. The provider will bill Nebraska Medicaid or one of the Medicaid Managed Care Organizations for all individuals enrolled in Nebraska Medicaid.

Service Type	Service	Unit	Rate
Authorized	Crisis Psychotherapy – First Hour	One Hour	\$132.26
Authorized	Crisis Psychotherapy – Additional 30 minutes (in addition to First Hour)	30 minutes	\$58.83

NOTE: Please refer to the applicable service definition (DBH or Nebraska Medicaid) for information on service expectations, staffing requirements, and length of services.

Non-Transfer of Funding Award

Any contract awarded to a successful Applicant may not be transferred or assigned by the Applicant/contractor to any other organization or individual.

Use of Subcontractors

The successful Applicant may be permitted to subcontract for the performance of certain required administrative or programmatic functions. Anticipated use of subcontractors must be clearly explained in the RFP identifying the proposed subcontractors and their proposed role. Use of treatment subcontractors and the terms and conditions of the subcontract must be approved by RVS in advance of execution of any subcontract.

The successful Applicant is fully responsible for all work performed by subcontractors. No subcontract into which the successful Applicant enters with respect to performance under the contract will, in any way, relieve the successful Applicant of any responsibility for performance of its duties.

Total Lancaster County Funds Available

Lancaster County intends to utilize up to \$6,000,000 in federal funds received via the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (“ARPA”) to purchase lands and develop facilities in order to provide building space suitable for operation of the Youth and Family Crisis Response Center. Lancaster County also intends to utilize these ARPA funds to purchase office equipment and furniture for the facility. Lancaster County will work collaboratively with Region V Systems and the identified service provider to design and construct a suitable facility which Lancaster County will continue to own after construction is complete.

The selected service provider will need to be willing to negotiate in good faith the terms of a lease agreement with the County for use of the facilities. The service provider will be responsible for paying utilities, maintenance, real and personal property taxes (if any), comprehensive liability insurance and extended coverage property insurance. Rent will be based solely on the capital expenditure cost, up to 2% of the total cost to develop the facilities.

Federal ARPA Terms and Conditions

Because ARPA funds will be utilized to provide facilities, the identified service provider will need to be able to comply with the terms and conditions attached to this RFQ as “Attachment A,” as part of its lease agreement with the County. Federal procurement guidelines will be followed by the County when entering into construction contracts and purchasing furniture and equipment. Construction of the facility and the purchasing of office furniture and equipment must be complete by December 31, 2026.

Intent to Negotiate Timeline

The Intent to Negotiate process will be completed in two phases. Below is the timeline and explanation of this process. Region V Systems expects to adhere to the schedule shown below. It should be noted, however, that some dates are approximate and are subject to change.

Activity	Date
Phase I - Request for Qualifications	
Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Released	September 11, 2023
RFQ Application Form and supporting documents (if applicable) due to Region V Systems	September 18, 2023 by 4:00 pm
RFQ Review and Scoring (including risk assessment)	September 20, 2023
Identified RFQ Applicants Notified of Acceptance/Denial to Proceed with RFP (via email with Request for Proposal attached)	September 21, 2023
Phase II – Request for Proposal	
Bidders Conference with Identified RFP Applicants (in person)	September 27, 2023 9:30 am
Proposals due to Region V Systems	October 20, 2023 by 4:00 pm
Review Committee Reviews Proposals	October 23 – 27, 2023
RVS Behavioral Health Advisory Committee Meeting (Review Committee Recommendation)	November 1, 2023
Lancaster County Board of Commissioners Meeting (Motion to Approve ARPA Funding for Project)	November 7, 2023
RVS Regional Governing Board Meeting (Motion to Approve Funding)	November 13, 2023
Award Announcement Disseminated and Contract Negotiations Begin	November 13, 2023

Phase I – Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

The RFQ is intended to function as an open process for qualified groups and organizations that are interested in developing and operating the Youth and Family Crisis Response Center. Any applicant not a current member of Region V Systems’ Behavioral Health Provider Network, shall meet the requirements for the

Minimum Standards for Enrollment in Region V Systems' Behavioral Health Provider Network.

To participate in the RFQ process, applicants must submit the "Request for Qualifications Application Form" and all supporting documentation. The "Request for Qualifications Application Form" is available for download at www.region5systems.net. Applicants should submit one (1) original and ten (10) copies of the application form to Region V Systems by September 18, 2023, no later than 4:00 pm. The application must contain the requested information.

Phase II – Request for Proposals

Applicants who are identified as satisfying the requirements in the RFQ process may submit proposals during the Request for Proposals process. Region V Systems intends to contract with the selected provider to develop and operate the Youth and Family Crisis Response Center.