



Community Based Care: Hardee, Highlands & Polk Counties

## **Request for Information (RFI)**

### **Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) - Females**

**RFI#: FY22/23-001**

**Release Date: November 23, 2022**

#### **I. Introduction**

Heartland for Children, Inc. ("HFC"), a Florida Not-for-Profit operating under the provisions of IRS Code 501 C (3) and located at 1239 East Main St., Bartow, Florida 33830 is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) to seek information from Respondents regarding the delivery of Qualified Residential Treatment Programs (QRTPs) for females in Polk, Highlands and Hardee Counties (Circuit 10). With the changes in licensing authority for QRTPs in Florida and the requirements being an unknown at this time, the respondent should also address how they could shift to an At-Risk program, as defined in 65C-46, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C), for females if requested by HFC.

Assuring the safety and welfare of children, while attempting to strengthen and preserve the child's family, requires a cohesive system that is family-centered, trauma-informed, community-based, integrated, outcome oriented, culturally competent, timely, and accountable for results. The cohesive system must include evidence-based primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention services that focus on capacity to safely serve children in their home to prevent removals as well as result in positive outcomes for children served in the child welfare system.

This RFI, as defined in section 287.012(22), Florida Statutes (F.S.), is for planning purposes only. This is not a solicitation for offers. Please monitor [www.heartlandforchildren.org](http://www.heartlandforchildren.org) for any changes or notices prior to submitting a response. The information gathered from this RFI may be used to develop one or more competitive solicitations.

#### **II. Purpose of an RFI**

Rule 60A-1.042, F.A.C., provides that an agency may request information by issuing a written RFI. Agencies are authorized to use an RFI in circumstances including, but not limited to, determining whether to competitively procure a commodity or contractual service, determining what solicitation process to use for a particular need, or researching general, special, and/or technical specifications for one or more competitive solicitation(s). A Respondent's response to an RFI is not an offer and the agency may not use the Respondent's submission to justify entering into a contract with that Respondent without completing an official procurement in accordance

with agency policies. Respondents submitting a response to an agency's RFI are not prohibited from responding to any related subsequently advertised competitive solicitation.

### III. **Background**

The Family First Prevention Services Act ("FFPSA") was passed and signed into law as part of the Bipartisan Budget Act on February 9, 2018. The act includes reforms to help keep children safely with their families and avoid the traumatic experience of entering foster care, emphasizes the importance of children growing up in families, and helps ensure children are placed in the least restrictive, most family-like setting appropriate to their special needs when foster care is needed.

A QRTP is a specific category of non-foster family home setting, for which child welfare agencies must meet detailed assessment, case planning, documentation, judicial determinations and ongoing review and permanency hearing requirements for a child to be placed in and continue to receive federal Title-IV-E funding for the placement. QRTPs are a subset of licensed group care facilities; they do not wholly replace them.

A QRTP must include a trauma-informed treatment model designed to meet the emotional and behavioral needs of children as identified by an assessment, within 30 days of the child's placement (must be court approved within 60 days of placement).

QRTP Requirements:

- Licensed as a child-care agency
- Accredited by a federally approved not-for-profit accreditation body
- Trauma-informed treatment model
- Serves children with serious emotional or behavioral disorders or disturbances
- Assessment of the child completed within 30 days of the start of placement by "Qualified Individuals" (not employed by the state or affiliated with any provider) using an age-appropriate, evidence-based, validated, functional assessment tool
- Placement is approved by the court within 60 days
- Clinical and Nursing staff available 24/7 and onsite according to the treatment model
- Providers must maintain documentation of family engagement, including contact with siblings
- QRTPs must provide six (6) months of post-discharge, family-based aftercare services/support

### IV. **Goal**

HFC is in search of solutions and options for the provision of a QRTP setting for eligible females within Polk, Highlands, and Hardee Counties (Circuit 10). The agency providing QRTP services will deliver a comprehensive array of services and abide by QRTP requirements as noted in Section V. HFC has secured a location for this proposed program in Bartow, Florida at the Heartland Youth Village. The provider ultimately identified to provide this service will be expected to enter into a lease agreement with HFC for the home on the property.

**V. Response**

In furtherance of the goals listed above in Section IV., HFC requests that Respondents consider the following:

- A. Contact Information
  - 1. Primary contact;
  - 2. Address;
  - 3. Phone; and
  - 4. Email.
- B. Are you a certified business enterprise with the State?
- C. Are you currently accredited and, if so, with which agency?
- D. Do you or your agency have corporate experience, including any previous work with federal, state, or local government, and the population size of customers served?
- E. Do you or your agency have experience providing or developing QRTP services, residential At-Risk for Commercial Sex Trafficking or similar services?
- F. Are you currently offering services in Florida and/or other states? If so, where?
- G. Recommendations/experience on how best to maximize state and federal funds allocated for this initiative, including Medicaid.
- H. Recommendations/experience regarding evidence-based and trauma-informed group care and/or therapeutic services.
- I. Recommendations/experience regarding family engagement and family based aftercare services.
- J. Recommendations/experience regarding the application of quality assurance practices, and continuous quality improvement initiatives.
- K. Recommendations/experience regarding documentation, reporting, and evaluation of services.

**VI. Response Submission**

Responses should address each request and question in Section V., point by point. Responses shall be submitted in portable document format (".PDF"), labeled with Respondent's organization name and the RFI number in the email subject line.

Submit one original electronic copy of the response, and one electronic redacted copy (if applicable) to the Point of Contact, listed below, within the required date and time identified below. Please direct responses to the point of contact and email address identified below:

Kim Corpus  
 Procurement Manager  
 Heartland for Children, Inc.  
 1239 E. Main Street  
 Bartow, FL 33830  
 (863) 519-8900 x 206  
[kcorpus@heartlandforchildren.org](mailto:kcorpus@heartlandforchildren.org)

**Please Note: Any submitted materials are subject to the Public Records Act, Chapter 119, F.S.**

**VII. Process**

Responses to this RFI will be reviewed by HFC for informational purposes only and will not result in the award of a contract. HFC will review the responses to determine the feasibility of issuing one or more competitive solicitation(s) for the defined product and service. Any request for cost information is for budgetary purposes only. If necessary, HFC may ask to hold presentations with one or more Respondents.

**VIII. Presentations**

After HFC receives responses to this RFI, and at the sole discretion of HFC, one or more Respondents may be selected to discuss with HFC the concepts submitted in the Respondent's RFI response. The purpose is to learn about the most current options available. Presentations are only intended for clarity and are not to be considered competitive.

**IX. Timeline**

Listed below are important dates and times when actions should be taken or completed. If HFC finds it necessary to update any of the dates and/or times noted, it will be accomplished by an Amendment to the RFI.

Event	Date
Release of RFI	11/23/2022
Deadline to submit written inquiries	12/22/2022
HFC's response to written inquiries	1/6/2023
Deadline to submit responses and close of RFI	1/20/2023

**X. RFI Questions and Contact**

Respondents shall address all questions regarding this RFI in writing to the Point of Contact identified in Section VI. HFC will post answers to written questions on [www.heartlandforchildren.org](http://www.heartlandforchildren.org) as noted in Section IX.

**XI. Confidential, Proprietary or Trade Secret Information**

If Respondent considers any portion of the documents, data or records submitted in response to this RFI to be confidential, proprietary, trade secret, or otherwise not subject to disclosure pursuant to Chapter 119, F.S., the Florida Constitution or other authority, the Respondent must mark the document as “Confidential” and simultaneously provide HFC with a separate redacted copy of its response, and briefly describe in writing the grounds for claiming exemption from the public records law, including the specific statutory citation for such exemption. This redacted copy shall contain HFC’s RFI name, number, and the name of the Respondent on the cover, and shall be clearly titled “Redacted Copy.” The Redacted Copy should only redact those portions of material that the Respondent claims are confidential, proprietary, trade secret, or otherwise not subject to disclosure.

In the event of a request for public records pursuant to Chapter 119, F.S., the Florida Constitution or other authority, to which documents that are marked as confidential are responsive, HFC will provide the Redacted Copy to the requestor. If a requestor asserts a right to the Confidential Information, HFC will notify the Respondent such an assertion has been made. It is the Respondent’s responsibility to assert that the information in question is exempt from disclosure under Chapter 119, F.S. or other applicable law. If HFC becomes subject to a demand for discovery or disclosure of the Confidential Information of the Respondent in a legal proceeding, HFC shall give the Respondent prompt notice of the demand prior to releasing the information, unless otherwise prohibited by applicable law. The Respondent shall be responsible for defending its determination that the redacted portions of its response are confidential, proprietary, trade secret, or otherwise not subject to disclosure.

By submitting a response to this RFI, the Respondent agrees to protect, defend, and indemnify HFC for any and all claims arising from or relating to the Respondent’s determination that the redacted portions of its RFI response are confidential, proprietary, trade secret, or otherwise not subject to disclosure. If Respondent fails to submit a redacted copy of information it claims is confidential, HFC is authorized to produce the entire documents, data, or records submitted to HFC in response to a public records request for these records.

**XII. Respondent Costs**

Respondents are responsible for all costs associated with the preparation and submission of the response, and any potential meeting to discuss this RFI. HFC will not be responsible for any Respondent related costs associated with responding to this RFI.

**XIII. Special Accommodations**

Any person with a disability requiring special accommodations to participate in the RFI shall contact the HFC sole point of contact at the phone number provided in Section VI. at least five business days prior to the event. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact this office by using the Florida Relay Services which can be reached at 1 (800) 955-8771 (TDD). Certified Business Enterprises are encouraged to participate in the RFI process.

**XIV. Disclaimer**

Please note that this and all other postings are secondary to the electronic posting on [www.heartlandforchildren.org](http://www.heartlandforchildren.org), which is the sole official posting for this advertisement. All inquiries and protests regarding this document must be made in writing to the HFC Point of Contact and documented within 72 hours of the first official posting. Physical posting will not extend the 72-hour deadline. Likewise, it is the responsibility of those submitting a response to this advertisement to obtain the results from the [www.heartlandforchildren.org](http://www.heartlandforchildren.org) official posting site in sufficient time to protect their own interests should they care to do so. Failure to file a protest within the time prescribed in section 120.57(3), F.S., or failure to post the bond or other security required by law within the time allowed for filing a bond, shall constitute a waiver of proceedings under chapter 120, F.S.