

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
PROCUREMENT NOTICE**

**Asian-Based Domestic Violence Service Program
Request for Qualifications
(ABDV_RFQ_013015)**

The State of Connecticut Department of Social Services is issuing **Addendum 1** to the **Asian-Based Domestic Violence Service Program Request for Qualifications**.

Addendum 1 contains questions submitted by interested parties and the official responses. These responses shall amend or clarify the requirements of the RFQ.

In the event of an inconsistency between information provided in the RFQ and information in these responses, the information in these responses shall control.

In the event that a response does not sufficiently clarify a question submitted, please forward that question and response to crystal.redding@ct.gov by **March 6, 2015, 2:00 p.m.**

Questions and Responses follow:

1. **Question:**

The second eligibility requirement states that we must be an agency whose **primary and target population** is persons who are defined as Asian. If we have worked extensively with Asian clients/individuals, but they are not necessarily our target population, does that automatically disqualify us from submitting an RFQ?

Response:

This will not automatically exclude the Respondent. However, we are looking for an organization or agency that is not only bilingual but culturally competent in providing service to the Asian Community. This variable will be weighted heavily.

2. **Question:**

In regards to the 'Agency Audited Financials' (as stated in section E.), are audit findings from the past two (2) years **necessary** for consideration? Is there a certain threshold based on the total annual revenue for an agency that can void this requirement?

Response:

"Audit findings" or our Agency Audited Financials' from the past two (2) years are **necessary to be considered**. Per the RFQ: To submit a responsive proposal, THE RESPONDENT SHALL provide a financial report that explains the audit findings for the past two (2) fiscal years, including the management letter and agency response. The

audit must have been conducted in compliance with standards adopted by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountant's Government Auditing Standards.

3. **Question:**

I receive the CT Procurement Daily Notices and received your bid request under the category of Preprinted Publications (Books, Periodical, etc.) As I read through this bid I don't see any request for printed items (which is what I do, print!). I would be delighted to respond to your bid request – but I don't think this is for print. Can you please confirm?

Response:

This procurement is seeking hands-on services designed to increase clients' (defined as Asian) stability, skill levels, and self-determination as well as to provide the highest level of quality services to the Asian communities within CT. These services are not for print materials solely, but print materials can be part of the services provided. Please be advised that eligibility and qualification requirements must be met to respond to the RFQ.

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
PROCUREMENT NOTICE**

**Asian-Based Domestic Violence Service Program
Request for Qualifications**

Addendum 1 issued February 24, 2015

Approved: _____
Crystal Redding

State of Connecticut Department of Social Services
(Original signature on document in procurement file)

This Addendum must be signed and returned with your submission

Authorized Signer

Name of Company

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
PROCUREMENT NOTICE**

**Asian-Based Domestic Violence Service Program
Request for Qualifications
(ABDV_RFQ_013015)**

The Department of Social Services (DSS) is seeking submissions from Asian culture-based organizations and agencies, qualified to address the shortage of Domestic Violence Services for persons of Asian descent, as well as the barriers that immigrant Asian women and men face when they are experiencing Intimate Partner Violence (IPV).

***Please note**, for the purpose of this proposal, intimate partner violence (IPV) is defined as actual or threatened, physical or psychological abuse by an intimate partner.*

Purpose: DSS aspires to engage various Asian communities within Connecticut (CT) in dialogues about the prevalence of IPV in order to increase awareness about available counseling and legal services for victims of Domestic Violence (DV). The Asian-Based Domestic Violence Service Program (ABDV) will provide safety awareness and supportive program services in CT. Services shall be designed to increase clients' stability, skill levels, and self-determination. The ABDV will work hand-in-hand with the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) in order to provide the highest level of quality services to the Asian communities within CT.

Eligibility Requirements: Organizations and agencies must meet the eligibility requirements listed below.

1. Be a public or private organization or community-based agency located within CT;
2. Be an agency whose **primary and target** population is persons who are defined as Asian; and
3. Have a demonstrated capacity to provide DV services.

Qualification Requirement: Organizations and agencies must have a minimum of three (3) years' experience providing services to individuals of Asian descent. At a minimum, services shall include: Case Management information and referral, Community Outreach, and training.

The Request for Qualifications is available in electronic format on the State Contracting Portal at <http://das.ct.gov/Director.aspx?Page=12> or from the Department's Official Contact:

Name: Crystal Redding, Contract Administration and Procurements
Address: 55 Farmington Ave. Hartford, CT 06105
Phone: 860-424-5234
E-Mail: crystal.redding@ct.gov

The RFQ is also available on the Department's website at: <http://www.ct.gov/dss/rfp>

Deadline for submission of qualifications is March 20, 2015, 2:00 PM Eastern Time.

Persons who are deaf or hearing impaired may use a TDD by calling 1-800-842-4524. Questions or requests for information in alternative formats must be directed to the Department's Official Contact at 860-424-5234.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Procurement Notice	. 1
Section I — GENERAL INFORMATION	. 4
A. Introduction	. 4
B. Abbreviations / Acronyms / Definitions	. 4
C. Instructions	. 5
D. Submission Format	. 8
E. Evaluation of Submissions.	. 8
Section II — MANDATORY PROVISIONS	.11
A. Standard Contract, Parts I and II.	.11
B. Assurances	.11
C. Terms and Conditions	.12
D. Rights Reserved to the State	.13
E. Statutory and Regulatory Compliance	.14
Section III — PROGRAM INFORMATION	.16
A. Department Overview.	.16
B. Program Overview	.16
C. Requirements of the Resultant Contractor	.17
D. Qualification Submission	.18
E. Cost Submission	.19
F. Billing and Payment Information	.20
Section IV — SUBMISSION OUTLINE	.21

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

■ A. INTRODUCTION

1. **RFQ Name:** **Asian-Based Domestic Violence Service Program (ABDV_RFQ_013015)**
2. **Summary.** The Department of Social Services (DSS) is seeking submissions from Asian culture-based organizations and agencies, qualified to address the shortage of Domestic Violence services for persons of Asian descent, as well as the barriers that immigrant Asian women and men face when they are experiencing Intimate Partner Violence (IPV).
3. **Commodity Codes.** The services that the Department wishes to procure through this RFQ are as follows:
 - 0085: Learning Packages, Pamphlets (Educational, Materials, Abuse, Prevention, Violence, Family, and Relationships)
 - 0600: Services (Professional, Support, Consulting and Misc. Services)
 - 2000: Community and Social Services
 - 3000: Education and Training Services

■ B. ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS / DEFINITIONS

CCADV	Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence
C.G.S.	Connecticut General Statutes
CT	Connecticut
DAS	Department of Administrative Services (CT)
DSS	Department of Social Services (CT)
DV	Domestic Violence
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act (CT)
FV	Family Violence
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
LOI	Letter of Intent
OPM	Office of Policy and Management (CT)
PSA	Personal Service Agreement
RFQ	Request for Qualifications
U.S.	United States

- *Asian:* (adj) of or relating to Asia or its people, customs, or languages (noun) a native of Asia or a person of Asian descent
- *contractor:* an organization or agency that enters into a Personal Service Agreement (PSA) with the Department as a result of this RFQ
- *prospective Respondent:* an organization or agency may submit qualifications to the Department in response to this RFQ, but has not yet done so
- *Respondent:* an organization or agency that has submitted qualifications to the Department in response to this RFQ

■ C. INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Official Contact.** The Department has designated the individual below as the Official Contact for purposes of this RFQ. The Official Contact is the **only authorized contact** for this procurement and, as such, handles all related communications on behalf of the Department. Respondents, prospective Respondents, and other interested parties are advised that any communication with any other Department employee(s) (including appointed officials) or personnel under contract to the Department about this RFQ is strictly prohibited. Respondents or prospective Respondents who violate this instruction may risk disqualification from further consideration.

Name: Crystal Redding, Contract Administration and Procurements
Address: 55 Farmington Ave., Hartford, CT 06105
Phone: 860-424-5234
E-Mail: crystal.redding@ct.gov

Please ensure that e-mail screening software (if used) recognizes and accepts e-mails from the Official Contact.

- 2. RFQ Information.** The RFQ, addenda to the RFQ and other information as associated with this procurement are available in electronic format from the Official Contact or from the Internet at the following locations:

- Department's RFQ Web Page
<http://www.ct.gov/dss/rfp>
- State Contracting Portal
<http://das.ct.gov/Director.aspx?Page=12>

It is strongly recommended that any Respondent or prospective Respondent interested in this procurement subscribe to receive e-mail alerts from the State Contracting Portal. Subscribers will receive a daily e-mail announcing procurements and addenda that are posted on the portal. This service is provided as a courtesy to assist in monitoring activities associated with State procurements, including this RFQ.

- 3. Contract Offers.** The offer of the right to negotiate any contract pursuant to this RFQ is dependent upon the availability of funding to the Department.

Tentative Contract Term: 04/01/2015 to 03/31/2018
Total Funding Available: \$300,000

- 4. Eligibility.** Organizations and agencies must meet the eligibility requirements listed below:
 - a. Be a public or private organization or community-based agency located within CT;
 - b. Be an agency whose **primary and target** population is persons who are defined as Asian; and
 - c. Have a demonstrated capacity to provide DV services.

- 5. Minimum Qualifications of Respondents.** To submit a response to this RFQ, a Respondent must have the following minimum qualification:

Have a minimum of three (3) years' experience providing services to individuals of Asian descent. At a minimum, services shall include: Case Management information and referral, Community Outreach, and training.

The Department reserves the right to reject the submission of any Respondent in default of any current or prior contract.

- 6. Procurement Schedule.** See below. Dates after the due date for submissions ("Submissions Due") are target dates only (*). The Department may amend the schedule, as needed. Any change will be made by means of an amendment to this RFQ and will be posted on the State Contracting Portal and the Department's RFQ Web Page.

Milestones	Ending Dates
RFQ Released	Friday, January 30, 2015
Questions Due 2:00 PM Eastern Time	Friday, February 13, 2015
Responses to Questions (tentative)	Friday, February, 20, 2015
Letter of Intent (LOI) 2:00 PM Eastern Time	Friday, February 27, 2015
Electronic & Hardcopy (2) Submissions Due by 2:00 PM Eastern Time	Friday, March 20, 2015
Successful Respondent Announced	TBD
Contract Negotiations Begin (tentative)	TBD
Contract Begins	Tentative April 1, 2015

- 7. Letter of Intent.** Prospective Respondents are encouraged, but not required to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI). The LOI is non-binding and does not obligate the sender to submit qualifications. The LOI must be submitted to the Official Contact by e-mail by the deadline established in the Procurement Schedule. The LOI must clearly identify the sender, including name, postal address, telephone number, and e-mail address.

- 8. Inquiry Procedures.** All questions regarding this RFQ or the Department's procurement process must be submitted to the Official Contact before the deadline specified in the Procurement Schedule. The early submission of questions is encouraged. Questions will not be accepted or answered verbally – neither in person nor over the telephone. All questions received before the deadline will be answered. However, the Department will not answer questions when the source is unknown (i.e., nuisance or anonymous questions). Questions deemed unrelated to the requirements of the RFQ or the procurement process will not be answered. At its discretion, the Department may or may not respond to questions received after the deadline. The Department may combine similar questions and give only one answer. All questions and answers will be compiled into a written addendum to this RFQ. If any answer to any question constitutes a material change to the RFQ, the question and answer will be placed at the beginning of the addendum and duly noted as such. The agency will release the answers to questions on the date established in the Procurement Schedule. The Department will publish any and all amendments or addenda to this RFQ on the

State Contracting Portal and on the Department's RFQ Web Page. At its discretion, the Department may distribute any amendments or addenda to this RFQ to prospective Respondents who submitted a Letter of Intent. **Submissions must include a signed Addendum Acknowledgement, which will be placed at the end of any and all amendments or addenda to this RFQ.**

- 9. Submission Due Date and Time.** The Official Contact or an appointed designee by the Official Contact is the only authorized recipient of submissions submitted in response to this RFQ. One (1) original and one (1) hard copy of the original submission along with one (1) conforming electronic copy on disk of the original proposal must be mailed or hand-delivered to the Official Contact or an appointed designee by the due date and time. Submissions submitted on a USB flash drive will not be evaluated. Submissions must also be e-mailed, with **ABDV_RFQ_013015** in the subject line and both original and copy and e-mailed proposal must be received on or before the due date and time:

- **Due Date: Friday, March 20, 2015**
- **Time: 2:00 PM Eastern Time**

Submissions will be accepted by the Official Contact, crystal.redding@ct.gov. The last date for submission of Qualifications is Thursday, March 12, 2015 @ 2:00 PM.

Faxed proposals will not be evaluated. A postmark date shall not be accepted as the basis for meeting the proposal due date and time. Respondents should not interpret or otherwise construe receipt of a proposal after the due date and time as acceptance of the proposal, since the actual receipt of the proposal is a clerical function. The Department suggests the Respondent use certified or registered mail, or a delivery service such as United Parcel Service (UPS) to deliver the original hard copy of the proposal. When hand-delivering proposals, Respondents should allow extra time to comply with building security and delivery procedures.

The hand-delivered original and one (1) hard copy of the original submission can be delivered to the lobby at the Department of Social Services, 55 Farmington Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105-3730. Proceed to the security desk and the Official Contact or designee will be called to receive the submission and provide the Respondent or courier with a receipt. Visitor parking is available across the street from 55 Farmington Ave.

Submissions shall not be considered received until they are in the hands of the Official Contact or another representative of the DSS Contract Administration and Procurement Unit designated by the Official Contact and e-mailed to the Official Contact. At the discretion of the Departments, late submissions may be destroyed or retained for pick-up by the submitters.

- 10. Multiple Submissions.** Multiple submissions are not an option with this procurement.

- 11. Declaration of Confidential Information.** Respondents are advised that all materials associated with this procurement are subject to the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Privacy Act, and all rules, regulations, and interpretations resulting from them. If a Respondent deems that certain information required by this RFQ is confidential, the Respondent must label such information as CONFIDENTIAL. In Section C of the submission, the Respondent must reference where the information labeled CONFIDENTIAL is located in the submission. *EXAMPLE: Section G.1.a.* For each subsection so referenced, the Respondent must provide a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify an exemption of the information from release under the FOIA. The explanation and rationale must be stated in terms of (a) the prospective harm to the competitive position of the Respondent that would result if the identified

information were to be released and (b) the reasons why the information is legally exempt from release pursuant to C.G.S. § 1-210(b).

12. Conflict of Interest - Disclosure Statement. Respondents must include a disclosure statement concerning any current business relationships (within the last three (3) years) that pose a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85. A conflict of interest exists when a relationship exists between the Respondent and a public official (including an elected official) or State employee that may interfere with fair competition or may be adverse to the interests of the State. The existence of a conflict of interest is not, in and of itself, evidence of wrongdoing. A conflict of interest may, however, become a legal matter if a Respondent tries to influence, or succeeds in influencing, the outcome of an official decision for their personal or corporate benefit. The Department will determine whether any disclosed conflict of interest poses a substantial advantage to the Respondent over the competition, decreases the overall competitiveness of this procurement, or is not in the best interests of the State. In the absence of any conflict of interest, a Respondent must affirm such in the disclosure statement. *Example: "[name of Respondent] has no current business relationship (within the last three (3) years) that poses a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85."*

■ D. SUBMISSIONS FORMAT

1. **Required Outline.** All submissions must follow the required outline presented in Section IV - Submission Outline. Submissions that fail to follow the required outline will be deemed non-responsive and not evaluated.
2. **Cover Sheet.** The Cover Sheet is Page 1 of the submission. Respondents must complete and use the [Cover Sheet](#) form, which is embedded in this RFQ as a hyperlink.
3. **Table of Contents.** All submissions must include a Table of Contents that conforms to the required submission outline. (See Section IV.)
4. **Executive Summary.** Submissions must include a high-level summary of the submission, not exceeding one (1) single-sided page. The Executive Summary shall include the following information of the Respondent:
 - a) Be a public or private organization or community-based agency located within CT;
 - b) Be an agency whose **primary and target** population is persons who are defined as Asian; and
 - c) Have a demonstrated capacity to provide DV services.
5. **Attachments.** Attachments other than the required Appendices or Forms identified in Section IV are not permitted and will not be evaluated. Further, the required Appendices or Forms must not be altered or used to extend, enhance, or replace any component required by this RFQ. Failure to abide by these instructions will result in disqualification.

■ E. EVALUATION OF SUBMISSIONS

1. **Evaluation Process.** It is the intent of the Department to conduct a comprehensive, fair, and impartial evaluation of submissions received in response to this RFQ. When evaluating submissions, negotiating with the successful Respondent, and offering the right to negotiate a contract, the Department will conform to its written procedures for PSA procurements (pursuant to C.G.S. § 4-217) and the State's Code of Ethics (pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 1-84 and 1-85).

- 2. Evaluation Team.** The Department will designate an Evaluation Team to evaluate qualifications submitted in response to this RFQ. The contents of all submissions, including any confidential information, will be shared with the Evaluation Team. Only submissions found to be responsive (that is, complying with all instructions and requirements described herein) will be reviewed, rated, and scored. Submissions that fail to comply with all instructions will be rejected without further consideration. Attempts by any Respondent (or representative of any Respondent) to contact or influence any member of the Evaluation Team may result in disqualification of the Respondent.
- 3. Minimum Submission Requirements.** All submissions must comply with the requirements specified in this RFQ. To be eligible for evaluation, submissions must (a) be electronically received on or before the due date and time; (b) meet the Submission Format requirements; (c) follow the required Submission Outline; and (d) be complete. Submissions that fail to follow instructions or satisfy these minimum submission requirements will not be reviewed further. The Department will reject any submission that deviates significantly from the requirements of this RFQ.
- 4. Evaluation Criteria (and Weights).** Submissions meeting the Minimum Submission Requirements will be evaluated according to the established criteria. The criteria are the objective standards that the Evaluation Team will use to evaluate the technical merits of the submissions. Only the criteria listed below will be used to evaluate submissions. The criteria are weighted according to their relative importance. The weights are confidential.

 - Qualification Submission
 - Appendices
- 5. Respondent Selection.** Upon completing its evaluation of submissions, the Evaluation Team will submit the rankings of all submissions to the Department head along with the Team's recommendations. The final selection of a successful Respondent is at the discretion of the Department head. Any Respondent selected will be so notified and awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with the Department. Such negotiations may, but will not automatically, result in a contract. Pursuant to Governor M. Jodi Rell's Executive Order No. 3, any resulting contract will be posted on the State Contracting Portal. All unsuccessful Respondents will be notified by e-mail at the Department's discretion, about the outcome of the evaluation and Respondent selection process.
- 6. Debriefing.** After receiving notification of the outcome of the evaluation process from the Department, any Respondent may contact the Official Contact and request a Debriefing of the procurement process and its submission. If Respondents still have questions after receiving this information, they may contact the Official Contact and request a meeting with the Department to discuss the procurement process. The Department shall schedule and conduct Debriefing meetings that have been properly requested, within fifteen (15) days of the Department's receipt of a request. The Debriefing meeting must not include or allow any comparisons of any submissions with other submissions, nor should the identity of the evaluators be released. The Debriefing process shall not be used to change, alter, or modify the outcome of a competitive procurement. More detailed information about requesting a Debriefing may be obtained from the Official Contact.
- 7. Appeal Process.** Any time after the submission due date, but **not later than thirty (30) days** after the Department notifies Respondents about the outcome of a

competitive procurement, Respondents may submit an Appeal to the Department. The e-mail sent date or the postmark date on the notification envelope will be considered "day one" of the thirty (30) days. Respondents may appeal any aspect of the Department's competitive procurement; however, such Appeal must be in writing and must set forth facts or evidence in sufficient and convincing detail for the Department to determine whether during any aspect of the competitive procurement there was a failure to comply with the State's statutes, regulations, or standards concerning competitive procurement or the provisions of the RFQ. Any such Appeal must be submitted to the Agency Head with a copy to the Official Contact. The Respondent must include the basis for the Appeal and the remedy requested. The filing of an Appeal shall not be deemed sufficient reason for the Department to delay, suspend, cancel, or terminate the procurement process or execution of a contract. More detailed information about filing an Appeal may be obtained from the Official Contact.

- 8. Contest of Solicitation or Award.** Pursuant to Section 4e-36 of the Connecticut General Statutes, "Any bidder or proposer on a state contract may contest the solicitation or award of a contract to a subcommittee of the State Contracting Standards Board..." More detailed information is available on the State Contracting Standards Board web site at <http://www.ct.gov/scsb/site/default.asp>.
- 9. Contract Execution.** Any contract developed and executed as a result of this RFQ is subject to the Department's contracting procedures, which may include approval by the Department of Administrative Services and Office of the Attorney General.

II. MANDATORY PROVISIONS

■ A. STANDARD CONTRACT, PARTS I AND II

By submitting qualifications in response to this RFQ, the Respondent implicitly agrees to comply with the provisions of Parts I and II of the State's "standard contract":

Part I of the standard contract is maintained by the Department and will include the scope of services, contract performance, budget, reports, and program-specific provisions of any resulting PSA. A sample of Part I is available from the Department's Official Contact upon request.

Part II of the standard contract is maintained by OPM and includes the mandatory terms and conditions of the PSA. Part II is available on OPM's web site at:
http://www.ct.gov/opm/fin/standard_contract.

Note:

Included in Part II of the standard contract is the State Elections Enforcement Commission's notice (pursuant to C.G.S. § 9-612(g)(2)) advising executive branch State contractors and prospective State contractors of the ban on campaign contributions and solicitations.

Part I of the standard contract may be amended by means of a written instrument signed by the Department, the selected Respondent (contractor), and, if required, the Attorney General's Office. Part II of the standard contract may be amended only in consultation with, and with the approval of, the Office of Policy and Management and the Attorney General's office.

■ B. ASSURANCES

By submitting qualifications in response to this RFQ, a Respondent implicitly gives the following assurances:

- 1. Collusion.** The Respondent represents and warrants that the Respondent did not participate in any part of the RFQ development process and had no knowledge of the specific contents of the RFQ prior to its issuance. The Respondent further represents and warrants that no agent, representative, or employee of the State participated directly in the preparation of the Respondent's submission. The Respondent also represents and warrants that the submission is in all respects fair and is made without collusion or fraud.
- 2. State Officials and Employees.** The Respondent certifies that no elected or appointed official or employee of the State has or will benefit financially or materially from any contract resulting from this RFQ. The Department may terminate a resulting contract if it is determined that gratuities of any kind were either offered or received by any of the aforementioned officials or employees from the Respondent, contractor, or its agents or employees.
- 3. Competitors.** The Respondent assures that the submission is not made in connection with any competitor submitting a separate submission in response to this RFQ. No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the Respondent to induce any competitor to submit, or not submit, qualifications for the purpose of restricting competition.

4. **Validity of Submission.** The Respondent certifies that the submission represents a valid and binding offer to provide services in accordance with the terms and provisions described in this RFQ and any amendments or attachments hereto. The submission shall remain valid for a period of 180 days after the submission due date and may be extended beyond that time by mutual agreement. At its sole discretion, the Department may include the submission, by reference or otherwise, into any contract with the successful Respondent.
5. **Press Releases.** The Respondent agrees to obtain prior written consent and approval of the Department for press releases that relate in any manner to this RFQ or any resultant contract.

■ **C. TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

By submitting qualifications in response to this RFQ, a Respondent implicitly agrees to comply with the following terms and conditions:

1. **Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action.** The State is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action employer and does not discriminate in its hiring, employment, or business practices. The State is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services, or activities.
2. **Preparation Expenses.** Neither the State nor the Department shall assume any liability for expenses incurred by a Respondent in preparing, submitting, or clarifying any qualifications submitted in response to this RFQ.
3. **Exclusion of Taxes.** The Department is exempt from the payment of excise and sales taxes imposed by the federal government and the State. Respondents are liable for any other applicable taxes.
4. **Changes to Submission.** No additions or changes to the original submission will be allowed after submission. While changes are not permitted, the Department may request and authorize Respondents to submit written clarification of their submissions, in a manner or format prescribed by the Department, and at the Respondent's expense.
5. **Supplemental Information.** Supplemental information will not be considered after the deadline for submissions, unless specifically requested by the Department. *The Department may ask a Respondent to give demonstrations, interviews, oral presentations or further explanations to clarify information contained in a submission.* Any such demonstration, interview, or oral presentation will be at a time selected and in a place provided by the Department. At its sole discretion, the Department may limit the number of Respondents invited to make such a demonstration, interview, or oral presentation.
6. **Presentation of Supporting Evidence.** If requested by the Department, a Respondent must be prepared to present evidence of experience, ability, data reporting capabilities, or other information necessary to satisfactorily meet the requirements set forth or implied in this RFQ. At its discretion, the Department may also check or contact any reference provided by the Respondent.

7. RFQ Is Not An Offer. Neither this RFQ nor any subsequent discussions shall give rise to any commitment on the part of the State or the Department or confer any rights on any Respondent unless and until a contract is fully executed by the necessary parties. The contract document will represent the entire agreement between the Respondent and the Department and will supersede all prior negotiations, representations or agreements, alleged or made, between the parties. The State shall assume no liability for costs incurred by the Respondent or for payment of services under the terms of the contract until the successful Respondent is notified that the contract has been accepted and approved by the Department and, if required, by the Attorney General's Office.

■ **D. RIGHTS RESERVED TO THE STATE**

By submitting qualifications in response to this RFQ, a Respondent implicitly accepts that the following rights are reserved to the State:

- 1. Timing Sequence.** The timing and sequence of events associated with this RFQ shall ultimately be determined by the Department.
- 2. Amending or Canceling RFQ.** The Department reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFQ on any date and at any time, if the Department deems it to be necessary, appropriate, or otherwise in the best interests of the State.
- 3. No Acceptable Submissions.** In the event that no acceptable qualifications are submitted in response to this RFQ, the Department may reopen the procurement process, if it is determined to be in the best interests of the State.
- 4. Award and Rejection of Submissions.** The Department reserves the right to award in part, to reject any and all submissions in whole or in part, for misrepresentation or if the submission limits or modifies any of the terms, conditions, or specifications of this RFQ. The Department may waive minor technical defects, irregularities, or omissions, if in its judgment the best interests of the State will be served. The Department reserves the right to reject the submission of any Respondent who submits qualifications after the submission due date and time.
- 5. Sole Property of the State.** All qualifications submitted in response to this RFQ are to be the sole property of the State. Any product, whether acceptable or unacceptable, developed under a contract awarded as a result of this RFQ shall be the sole property of the State, unless stated otherwise in this RFQ or subsequent contract. The right to publish, distribute, or disseminate any and all information or reports, or part thereof, shall accrue to the State without recourse.
- 6. Contract Negotiation.** The Department reserves the right to negotiate or contract for all or any portion of the services contained in this RFQ. The Department further reserves the right to contract with one or more Respondent for such services.
- 7. Clerical Errors in Award.** The Department reserves the right to correct inaccurate awards resulting from its clerical errors. This may include, in extreme circumstances, revoking the awarding of a contract already made to a Respondent and subsequently awarding the contract to another Respondent. Such action on the part of the State shall not constitute a breach of contract on the part of the State since the contract with the initial Respondent is deemed to be void *ab initio* and of no effect as if no contract ever existed between the State and the Respondent.

■ E. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

By submitting qualifications in response to this RFQ, the Respondent implicitly agrees to comply with all applicable State and federal laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, the following:

- 1. Freedom of Information, C.G.S. § 1-210(b).** The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) generally requires the disclosure of documents in the possession of the State upon request of any citizen, unless the content of the document falls within certain categories of exemption, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-210(b). Respondents are generally advised not to include in their submissions any confidential information. If the Respondent indicates that certain documentation, as required by this RFQ, is submitted in confidence, the State will endeavor to keep said information confidential to the extent permitted by law. The State has no obligation to initiate, prosecute, or defend any legal proceeding or to seek a protective order or other similar relief to prevent disclosure of any information pursuant to a FOIA request. The Respondent has the burden of establishing the availability of any FOIA exemption in any proceeding where it is an issue. While a Respondent may claim an exemption to the State's FOIA, the final administrative authority to release or exempt any or all material so identified rests with the State. In no event shall the State or any of its employees have any liability for disclosure of documents or information in the possession of the State and which the State or its employees believe(s) to be required pursuant to the FOIA or other requirements of law.
- 2. Contract Compliance, C.G.S. § 4a-60 and Regulations of CT State Agencies § 46a-68j-21 thru 43, inclusive.** CT statute and regulations impose certain obligations on State agencies (as well as contractors and subcontractors doing business with the State) to ensure that State agencies do not enter into contracts with organizations or businesses that discriminate against protected class persons.

IMPORTANT NOTE: To submit a responsive submission, the Respondent must upload the Workplace Analysis Affirmative Action Report through an automated system hosted by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS)/Procurement Division, and the Department of Rehabilitation Services can review said document online. The [DAS guide to uploading affidavits and nondiscrimination forms online](#) is embedded in this section as a hyperlink.

- 3. Consulting Agreements, C.G.S. § 4a-81.** Proposals for State contracts with a value of \$50,000 or more in a calendar or fiscal year, excluding leases and licensing agreements of any value, shall require a consulting agreement affidavit attesting to whether any consulting agreement has been entered into in connection with the proposal. As used herein "consulting agreement" means any written or oral agreement to retain the services, for a fee, of a consultant for the purposes of (A) providing counsel to a contractor, vendor, consultant or other entity seeking to conduct, or conducting, business with the State, (B) contacting, whether in writing or orally, any executive, judicial, or administrative office of the State, including any department, institution, bureau, board, commission, authority, official or employee for the purpose of solicitation, dispute resolution, introduction, requests for information or (C) any other similar activity related to such contract. Consulting agreement does not include any agreements entered into with a consultant who is registered under the provisions of C.G.S. Chapter 10 as of the date such affidavit is submitted in accordance with the provisions of C.G.S. § 4a-81. The Consulting Agreement Affidavit (OPM Ethics Form 5) is available on OPM's website at [OPM: Ethics Forms](#)

IMPORTANT NOTE: To submit a responsive submission, the Respondent must upload the Consulting Agreement Affidavit (OPM Ethics Form 5) through an automated system hosted by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS)/Procurement Division, and the Department of Rehabilitation Services can review said document online. The [DAS guide to uploading affidavits and nondiscrimination forms online](#) is embedded in this section as a hyperlink.

- 4. Gift and Campaign Contributions, C.G.S. §§ 4-250 and 4-252(c); Governor M. Jodi Rell's Executive Orders No. 1, Para. 8 and No. 7C, Para. 10; C.G.S. § 9-612(g)(2).** **If a Respondent is offered** an opportunity to negotiate a contract with an anticipated value of \$50,000 or more in a calendar or fiscal year, the Respondent must fully disclose any gifts or lawful contributions made to campaigns of candidates for statewide public office or the General Assembly. Municipalities and CT State agencies are exempt from this requirement. The gift and campaign contributions certification (OPM Ethics Form 1) is available on OPM's website at [OPM: Ethics Forms](#)
IMPORTANT NOTE: The selected Respondent(s) must upload the Gift and Campaign Contributions Certification (OPM Ethics Form 1) through an automated system hosted by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS)/Procurement Division prior to contract execution, and the Department of Rehabilitation Services can review said document online. The [DAS guide to uploading affidavits and nondiscrimination forms online](#) is embedded in this section as a hyperlink.
- 5. Nondiscrimination Certification, C.G.S. §§ 4a-60(a)(1) and 4a-60a(a)(1).** **If a Respondent is offered** an opportunity to negotiate a contract, the Respondent must provide the Department with *written representation* or *documentation* that certifies the Respondent complies with the State's nondiscrimination agreements and warranties. A nondiscrimination certification is required for all State contracts – regardless of type, term, cost, or value. Municipalities and CT State agencies are exempt from this requirement. The nondiscrimination certification forms are available on OPM's website at [OPM: Nondiscrimination Certification](#)
IMPORTANT NOTE: The selected Respondent(s) must upload the Nondiscrimination Certification through an automated system hosted by the Department of Administrative Services (DAS)/Procurement Division prior to contract execution, and the Department of Rehabilitation Services can review said document online. The [DAS guide to uploading affidavits and nondiscrimination forms online](#) is embedded in this section as a hyperlink.
- 6. [Certification Regarding Lobbying](#), (embedded as a hyperlink) - **To submit a responsive submission**, the Respondent must provide a signed statement to the effect that no 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 the awarding of any Federal contract, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.**

III. PROGRAM INFORMATION

■ A. DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES OVERVIEW

The Department of Social Services (DSS) administers and delivers a wide variety of services to children, families, adults, people with disabilities and the elderly, including health care coverage, child care, child support, long-term care and supports, energy assistance, food and nutrition aid, and program grants. DSS administers myriad state and federal programs and one-third of the state budget, currently serving more than 848,000 individuals in nearly 540,000 households (April 2014 data).

By statute, DSS is the state agency responsible for administering a number of programs under federal legislation, including the Food Stamp Act, the Older Americans Act, and the Social Security Act.

The Department is headed by the Commissioner of Social Services, and there are deputy commissioners for programs and administration. The agency delivers most of its programs through 12 field offices (including three benefits centers available by phone) located throughout the state, with central administrative offices located in Hartford. In addition, many services funded by the agency are available through community-based agencies and partner contractors. The agency has out stationed employees at hospitals to expedite Medicaid/HUSKY applications, and also works with community service providers to facilitate program applications.

Attached to the Department for administrative purposes only are the Department of Rehabilitation Services, encompassing vocational rehabilitation services, services for the blind and visually-impaired and the deaf and hearing-impaired, and disability determination services; the Department on Aging; and the Child Day Care Council.

Mission and Vision

DSS Mission

Guided by shared belief in human potential, we aim to increase the security and well-being of Connecticut individuals, families, and communities.

DSS Vision

To become a world-class service organization.

■ B. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Department of Social Services (DSS) aspires to engage various Asian communities within Connecticut (CT) in dialogues about the prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) violence in order to increase awareness about available counseling and legal services for victims of domestic violence (DV). DSS recognizes that having immigrant status can present special challenges for individuals because of the lack of a family support structure, limited financial independence and/or limited English language skills.

The Asian-Based Domestic Violence Service Program shall provide DV related services and supports. The successful Respondent will work hand-in-hand with the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) in order to provide training related to DV and the Asian culture to member agencies in order to provide the best services to the Asian communities in CT. Through collaboration with CCADV and its member programs, the successful Respondent will also conduct educational presentations for community leaders and organizations as well as provide outreach/education/awareness sessions to members of the Asian communities.

■ **C. REQUIREMENTS OF THE RESULTANT CONTRACTOR**

1. Actively engage in outreach activities in the Asian community.
2. Foster positive relationships between CCADV's membership and Asian communities by participating in relevant coalition meetings, as well as media and public events.
3. Provide training on Asian population to CCADV's staff, membership staff and interns, and volunteers, as well as others providing care and services to Asian IPV survivors.
4. Develop linguistically appropriate educational and outreach materials specific to the Asian communities.
5. Improve language accessibility for Asians to services: telephone interpretation services, literature in Asian languages, and/or forms in Asian languages.
6. Collaborate with shelter staff to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services to Asian clients.
7. Provide referrals to counselors, doctors, and attorneys who are familiar with Asian culture.
8. Educate the Asian community about DV issues in the Asian context and how the community can change social attitudes about DV.
9. Maintain case notes on client services, goals, and outcomes of clients who have requested DV services. Referrals for support services will occur in response to identified needs.
10. Shall conduct intake/assessments of each individual seeking DV services and shall file the intake in the client's file and **maintain client information in a secure system**. An intake is defined as the process of gathering information to understand the client's situation and what can be done to assist the client. Such intake shall include, but not be limited to: age, marital status, family size, race, ethnicity, major source of income, employment status, education history, history of substance abuse, history of DV, current situation, mental and physical health, and family or friend support system. The initial intake assessment shall be the basis for developing the safety plan with the client as described herein.
11. Establish and maintain a safety plan with each client. A safety plan is a mutually agreed tool, developed between the resultant contractor and the client, which is used to address the clients' safety needs. The resultant contractor shall develop the overall

safety plan with the client at the time of entry into the program and thereafter review and update the safety plan on an as needed basis. The safety plan will provide personal safety information and help clients to increase personal safety skills invoking them to care for themselves based on what the client defines is the priority risk.

12. Provide educative counseling for clients. Counseling is defined as crisis intervention, emotional support and guidance to help clients address their situation. The resultant contractor shall document such counseling in the client's file.
13. Supply direct personal intervention on the client's behalf and as determined by the clients' needs as defined by the client. The resultant contractor shall utilize the "client defined" advocacy model to encourage self-determination, self-reliance, safety planning, and increased awareness of available options.
14. Provide Crisis Intervention for clients in crisis situations by providing emotional support, acknowledging their circumstance, and providing the information and resources to address their immediate situation.
15. Provide support groups for the clients, as well as documenting and keeping on file information for clients participating in these groups. These groups may include Psycho-education, Welfare Rights, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Pain Management to reduce psychosomatic symptoms, U.S. citizenship classes, and Therapeutic groups for adults and Parenting for parents.
16. Refer clients to other public and private agencies to assist in obtaining security deposits, housing subsidies, energy assistance, and other financial assistance to secure new housing. The resultant contractor shall document the referral in the client's file.
17. Form and maintain collaborative working relationships with community-based service organizations including the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) – Child Protective Services, the Department's Welfare, Housing, Family Relations and/or court personnel, and police.

■ D. QUALIFICATION SUBMISSION

General – Responses for this section must describe the Respondent's ability and competence to perform the requirements specified in this RFQ.

The Department reserves the right to reject the submission of any Respondent in default of any current or prior contract.

To submit a responsive submission, the following information about the Respondent's qualifications and experience must be provided.

1. A description of the Respondent's qualifications to perform the services required by this RFQ. The description shall include a minimum of three (3) years' experience providing services to individuals of Asian descent including, but not limited to: Case Management information and referral, Community Outreach, and training.
2. A description of the Respondent's demonstrated experience in:
C. REQUIREMENTS OF THE RESULTANT CONTRACTOR, 1-17 above.

A responsive submission must include information addressing each requirement, 1.-17., individually, and not exceed a total of twenty (20) single-sided pages.

a. Style Requirements. The submission must conform to the following specifications:

Font Size:	Maximum of 12-point
Font Type:	Arial or Tahoma
Line Spacing:	Single-spaced

3. Current resume(s) of the project director and any other individual that will be providing services as described in this RFQ, not exceeding two (2) single-sided pages for each resume, as **Appendix 1**. The resumes must reflect qualifications including related experience and education. Also to be included, shall be job descriptions for positions to be filled, pursuant a successful response as **Appendix 2**;
4. Three (3) letters of reference, as **Appendix 3**. The letters of reference must be from persons able to provide adequate information about the Respondent's qualifications. References must include their name, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address. If during the past five (5) years the Respondent has directly or indirectly through a subcontract, performed services for or through a contract with the Department, the Respondent must include a Department reference.

The Department expects to use these references in its evaluation process.

■ E. COST SUBMISSION

All proposed costs are subject to the standards developed by the State Office of Policy and Management for determining the cost of contracts, grants, and other agreements with organizations that receive funding from the State. Be advised that the cost proposal is subject to revision prior to contract execution in order to ensure compliance with the OPM cost standards. More information about the cost standards is available on OPM's web site: [Cost Standards](#)

1. Agency Audited Financials. To submit a responsive proposal, **THE RESPONDENT SHALL** provide a financial report that explains the audit findings for the past two (2) fiscal years, including the management letter and agency response. The audit must have been conducted in compliance with standards adopted by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountant's Government Auditing Standards.
2. Budget. To submit a responsive proposal, **THE RESPONDENT SHALL** provide an annual line-item budget for a **three (3) year contract term, defined as the contract period beginning April 1, 2015 through March 31, 2018. THE RESPONDENT SHALL** also provide a budget for the **option for two (2) one (1) year extensions** at the discretion of the Department, using the [Budget Form](#), embedded as a hyperlink. The budget form will provide:

- the cost for each contract year:
04/01/2015 - 03/31/2016 - year one (1)
04/01/2016 - 03/31/2017 - year two (2)
04/01/2017 - 03/31/2018 - year three (3)
- a total cost for the contract period, 04/01/2015 - 03/31/2018;

- the annual cost for each of two additional contract years: 04/01/2018 - 03/31/2019; 04/01/2019-03/31/2020; and
- a grand total cost for the five (5) year contract period, 04/01/2015 - 03/31/2020.

The budgets shall include line items for all expenses to be incurred through the delivery of services.

The Respondent's total administration costs shall not exceed 15 percent of the total funding request per contract year and the total anticipated contract period. In addition, the Contractor's total administration costs shall not exceed 15 percent of the quarterly expenditures reported. The remaining balance of the total funding request shall be for the activities required by this RFQ.

3. Budget Justification / Narrative. To submit a responsive proposal, **THE RESPONDENT SHALL** detail the **ABDV_RFQ_013015** costs. The narrative shall include the total number of hours the Respondent expects to spend on the program by category of the staff. Present a projection of the number of individuals to be served by this program and strategies to ensure the provision of required service.

■ F. BILLING AND PAYMENT INFORMATION

All payments to the contactor shall be contingent upon the Department's receipt and approval of completed [W-1270](#) forms, which shall be provided by the Department, and itemized invoices detailing time spent on contractually-required activities and a description of the work completed. Specific terms and conditions pertaining to the payment process shall be set forth in the terms of the PSA.

IV. SUBMISSION OUTLINE

This section presents the **required** outline that must be followed when submitting qualifications in response to this RFQ. Submissions must include a Table of Contents that exactly conforms to the required submission outline (below). Submissions must include all the components listed below, in the order specified, using the prescribed lettering and numbering scheme. Incomplete submissions will not be evaluated.

	Your page #
A. Cover Sheet	1.
B. Table of Contents	2.
C. Declaration of Confidential Information	3.
D. Conflict of Interest - Disclosure Statement	
E. Executive Summary	
F. Qualification Submission	
G. Responses to D. QUALIFICATION SUBMISSION	
H. Responses to E. COST SUBMISSION	
I. Appendices	
1. Appendix 1 - Resumes	
2. Appendix 2 – Job Descriptions	
3. Appendix 3 – Reference Letters	
J. Forms	
1. Addendum Acknowledgement.	
2. Workplace Analysis Affirmative Action Report	
3. OPM Ethics Forms	
4. Certification Regarding Lobbying	