

RFP # 22000000003B  
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

RESPONSES TO SUBMITTED QUESTIONS

1. Reference *Request for Proposal*, page 3:

*Issuance of this Request For Proposals in no way constitutes a commitment by the Soliciting Party to award a contract. The final terms of engagement for the service provider will be set out in a contract which will be effective upon its acceptance by the Soliciting Party as evidenced by the signature thereon of its authorized representative. Provisions of this Request For Proposals and the accepted Proposal may be incorporated into the terms of the engagement should the Issuer so dictate.*

- a. **Please clarify if the ABPP is amenable to any termination of the contract by an awarded vendor.**
- b. **Please specify if proposal submission binds a proposer to enter into a contract if awarded.**

**RESPONSE:**

- a. **Contract may be terminated for cause and/or without cause in accordance with negotiated terms of a contract and in compliance with state contracting requirements.**
- b. **Proposer may decline to enter into contract after an award for an objective good faith reason that was unforeseen at the time of making the proposal.**

2. Reference *Request for Proposal*, page 4:

*Seeking proposals from qualified professionals/professional organizations for evidence-based criminal thinking interventions, drug/alcohol outpatient and intensive drug/alcohol outpatient treatment, mental health counseling, and re-entry services to parolees, probationers, and individual released early from prison participating in the Board of Pardons and Paroles Parole/Probation Reentry Program in Uniontown, Alabama (Perry County).*

- a. **In reference to “mental health counseling,” please specify whether the vendor is expected operate in compliance with the Department of Mental Health’s Administrative Code related to 580-2-9-.09 General Outpatient or 580-2-9-.14 Adult Intensive Day Treatment.**

**RESPONSE:**

**Yes. The vendor is expected to comply with any applicable Alabama Department of Mental Health rules in the provision of services to participants.**

3. Reference *Request for Proposal: A. Purpose of RFP*, page 5:

*The PREP Center is a short-term transitional residential facility providing reentry and rehabilitation services to eligible probationers, parolees and inmates released early from prison as required by law ("mandatory releasees").*

- a. Please clarify what will determine a participant's eligibility to receive Psychological Services at the PREP Center.**
  - i. Please identify any assessments, completed treatment, convictions, or violations that the ABPP will use to determine a participant's referral to the program.**
  - ii. Please confirm that participants will receive medical clearance from the contracted Medical Services vendor prior to participation in the Psychological Services program.**

**RESPONSE:**

**a.i. A participant's referral to and participation in the PREP Center program where psychological services will be available will be based on a validated risk-assessment tool or judicial or Board Order. Participants will be assessed for psychological services using ADMH approved assessment tools.**

**a.ii. The contracted medical services vendor or a ABPP staff nurse will screen each participant for their ability to participate in the psychological services program.**

4. Reference *Request for Proposal: A. Purpose of RFP*, page 5:

*The Alabama Board of Pardons and Paroles (hereinafter "the Board" or "ABPP") is seeking proposals to provide evidence-based criminal thinking interventions, drug/alcohol outpatient (OP) and intensive drug/alcohol outpatient treatment (IOP)...*

- a. Please confirm the awarded vendor is expected to administer drug/alcohol treatment in alignment with OP and IOP standards, and will not be required to seek or fund OP/IOP certification through the Alabama Department of Mental Health.**
  - i. If a vendor is expected to obtain certification through the Alabama Department of Mental Health, please confirm which certification will apply to the PREP Center:**

- 580-9-44-.14 Level 0.5: Early Intervention
- 580-9-44-.15 Level I: Outpatient Treatment
- 580-9-44-.17 Level II.1: Intensive Outpatient Treatment

**RESPONSE:**

Vendor is expected to obtain all three certifications from the ADMH, unless the ADMH requires otherwise.

5. Reference *Request for Proposal: B. Background*, page 6:

(4) Education

(5) Employment preparation and training

(6) Preparing employment related documents and obtaining identification

(8) Community Service

- a. Please specify if the Psychological Services vendor is expected to conduct education, employment preparation and training, prepare employment related documents, and obtain identification for program participants.
- b. Please confirm the Psychological Services vendor will not be responsible for providing transportation services to and from the Community Service locations.

**RESPONSE:**

- a. Vendor is not expected to conduct education, or employment preparation and training, but is expected to assist participants with obtaining identification as needed and creating a continuation plan upon completion of the program for follow up aftercare.
- b. No. The vendor will not be responsible for providing transportation services.

6. Reference *Request for Proposal: B. Background*, page 6:

*Phase 2 (30-45 days): Phase 2 focuses on maintaining sobriety of the participant, continued mental health treatment, random drug screens, continued education/trade training.*

- a. Please confirm the ABPP PREP Center personnel will be responsible for conducting random drug screens.

**RESPONSE:**

Yes. ABPP will conduct random drug screens.

7. Reference Request for Proposal: B. Background, page 6:

*At the discretion of ABPP, Phases 1 and 2 may be modified as necessary as may be in the best interests of the Board, PREP Center, participants, and public safety.*

- a. **If ABPP modifies the scope of practice based on the best interests of the Board, applicable Court Orders / Decrees, or laws, please confirm the vendor will receive equitable adjustments/increases for additional mental health care costs.**

**RESPONSE:**

**To the extent that a program phase is modified and the modification results in increased vendor mental health care costs, ABPP would consider a contract amendment to increase the amount that may be paid to the vendor.**

8. Reference Request for Proposal: B. Background, page 7:

*Beginning in approximately October of 2022, the Board anticipates a population of 30-35 participants residing at the PREP Center. That number will gradually increase with new participants routinely arriving. The Board anticipates 150-180 resident participants by the end of the first full year of operation and expects to maintain 150-180 participants on a monthly basis thereafter. The total average length of time a participant will reside at the PREP Center is anticipated to be approximately 90 days.)*

- a. **Please confirm vendors can offer a Psychological Services program start date that is later than October 2022.**
- b. **Please specify the anticipated Contract Effective and Termination dates.**
- c. **Please specify whether all 150-180 participants will be receiving Psychological Services provided by the vendor.**
- i. **For example, can a proposer offer an IOP Program for a specific number of participants, OP to another number of participants, and mental health counseling services to yet another number of specified participants?**

**RESPONSE:**

- a. **ABPP prefers that the vendor be prepared to offer Psychological services in October of 2022, but understands additional time may be necessary for start-up preparation and implementation. Therefore, the Board would be open to start date later than October of 2022, but as**

soon thereafter as possible.

- b. ABPP anticipates entering into an initial two-year contract with an effective date of October 1, 2022, unless the start date is extended by necessity or agreement. The contract will provide renewal options that would not extend the total length of the contract beyond five years.
- c. The provision of treatment services will be assessment driven. Therefore, different programs will be needed.

9. Reference *Request for Proposal: B. Background*, page 7:

*However, items such as phones, internet service, computers, copiers, fax machines, treatment materials, furniture, and other office supplies will be the responsibility of the contractor.*

- a. **If vendor is responsible for funding and installing internet access, please confirm the PREP Center will offer sufficient space for the installation of routers, connectivity, wiring, etc. and such equipment and supplies shall remain the property of vendor during the term of the contract and upon expiration or termination of the contract. Further, if installation of service for phone and/or internet connectivity is required, that the title holder of the property where the PREP Center is located shall promptly cooperate in all required permitting, approvals, or easement agreements, as necessary, if necessary, and shall hold vendor harmless from any third- party obligations due to such installation upon expiration or termination of the contract.**

**RESPONSE:**

**Equipment and supplies installed or placed in the PREP Center by the Vendor shall remain the property and responsibility of the vendor during the term of the contract and upon expiration or termination of the contract. The PREP Center will cooperate in all required permitting, approvals, or easement agreements as necessary and will cooperate with the vendor on the prompt removal of the equipment or supplies upon the expiration or termination of the Contract. ABPP cannot agree to a vendor hold harmless provisions.**

10. Reference *Request for Proposal: C. Description of Required Services*, page 7:

*The vendor will conduct assessments in compliance with applicable rules of the Alabama Department of Mental Health. The treatment program shall be certified and use the Department of Mental Health's (DMH) approved assessment tool.*

- a. **Please provide the Department of Mental Health's (DMH) approved**

assessment tool.

**RESPONSE:**

**Applicable ADMH assessment tools may be obtained through the ADMH.**

11. Reference *Request for Proposal: C. Description of Required Services*, page 8:

*The vendor will be tasked with making treatment referrals for participants with mental illness and/or mental health related issues, including but not limited to: (1) treatment with a psychiatrist that holds a license as a medical doctor in the State of Alabama and is otherwise qualified to practice psychiatry in the State of Alabama and (2) scheduling psychiatric appointments for participants with that psychiatrist.*

- a. Please clarify if the vendor is required to just provide the referral for treatment or if the vendor is required to have a psychiatrist on staff to deliver the psychiatric treatment.**

**RESPONSE:**

**The vendor is responsible to have a psychiatrist on staff to be available for in-person or telehealth/telepsychiatry services.**

12. Reference *Request for Proposal: C. Description of Required Services*, page 9:

*Telehealth/Telepsychiatry services may be provided. The participant is responsible for treatment costs.*

- a. Please specify if participants will lose any insurance benefits they may possess during their stay at the PREP Center, as many parolees experience during "dips and dunks."**
- b. Please confirm participants will be "Medicaid Eligible" or enrolled in "Medicaid Benefits" prior to program referral.**
- c. If vendor offers participants Telepsychiatry services within the PREP Center, please allow a vendor to bill the ABPP for the hours of service provided to participants within the facility.**
- i. If not, please explain how vendors will receive payment from participants while they are enrolled in the program.**

**RESPONSE:**

- a. ABPP cannot guarantee that participants will not lose any insurance benefits they possess during their stays at the PREP Center. Most**

participants would be in parole or probation status while residing at the PREP Center and therefore should not lose insurance benefits.

- b. ABPP cannot confirm that all participants will be Medicaid eligible or enrolled in Medicaid benefits prior to program referral.
- c. The vendor may bill ABPP for telepsychiatry services provided to a participant at the PREP Center to the extent that telepsychiatry services are not covered by the participant's health insurance or health assistance program.

13. Reference *Request for Proposal: C. Description of Required Services*, page 9:

*Psychiatric medication may be prescribed and provided to residents as needed. Preferably, the vendor will provide for this service directly, but may meet this requirement by using a subcontractor. The vendor will assist as needed in overseeing the administration of prescribed medication. The vendor will be required to assist residents who exit the PREP Center with connection to a local mental health provider for continuation of care.*

- a. **Would the ABPP please consider transferring this requirement to the Medical Services vendor. In an effort to maintain continuity of care and cost synergies, please consider moving all clinical services required in this Psychological Services RFP to the medical RFP. After reviewing this RFP and the Medical Services RFP, we note that there is significant duplication of services if the Psychological Services vendor is required to prescribe medication, including two sets of labs, two pharmacies, two medical record systems, etc. In addition, this requirement creates significant liabilities for the vendor since prescribing psychiatric medication requires full collaboration with medical providers in order to understand comorbidities, medication plans, etc.**
- b. **If this requirement is not transferred to the Medical Services RFP, please specify whether the Medical Services vendor or the Psychological Services vendor will prescribe psychiatric medication.**
  - i. **If the Psychological Services vendor is expected to prescribe psychiatric medication, please confirm the Medical Services vendor will share each participant's entire medical record, as comorbidities must be accounted for during the prescription and treatment of participants who need psychotropic medication.**
  - ii. **Please confirm medical records will be shared by the Medical Services vendor (i.e., the Psychological Services vendor will be listed**

on a medical intake consent for release of information form).

- c. Please confirm the Medical Services vendor will have a 24/7/365 onsite presence at the PREP Center to address any critical health risks.
- d. To promote cost and operational synergies for the PREP Center, please identify the proposed Medical Services vendor's staffing, as a Psychological Services vendor does not want to duplicate positions or responsibilities.
  - i. For example, if the medical vendor has clinical staff to dispense medication, etc., we assume the ABPP does not want that effort duplicated by the Psychological Services vendor.
- e. Please identify the ABPP's preferred staffing matrix for this residential mental health treatment program.
- f. Please identify who will fund the cost of prescribed medications.
  - i. If the Psychological Services vendor is expected to prescribe and pay for medications, please allow the vendor to include a specific line-item that identifies the maximum allowable medication cost in the proposed Budget.
  - ii. If the Psychological Services vendor is expected to prescribe and pay for medications, please confirm a vendor can staff a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner to provide care and prescribe to the participants.

**RESPONSE:**

- a. *ABPP has not yet contracted with a medical service provider and will not consider transferring this requirement to a future medical service provider at this time.*
- b. *Psychological Services vendor will prescribe psychiatric medications.*
  - i. *Yes, ABPP anticipates that the medical services provider will share its medical records*
  - ii. *Yes, ABPP anticipates sharing of records through a consent for release of information.*
- c. *ABPP anticipates the medical service contractor will have a Monday thru Friday onsite presence during yet to be determined daytime hours with an emergency plan for after hours and weekends.*



- d. *ABPP does not yet have a contract with a medical services vendor and medical service staffing has not yet been determined.*
- e. *ABPP does not currently have a preferred staffing matrix.*
- f. *The cost of medications not covered by a participant's insurance or other health coverage would be paid by the Psychological Services vendor.*
  - i. *Vendor may include a specific line-item that identifies a maximum allowable medication cost in the proposed budget*
  - ii. *Vendor may propose staffing the PREP Center with a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner to provide care and prescribe medication.*

14. Reference *Request for Proposal: C. Description of Required Services*, page 9:

*The successful vendor will have access to inpatient drug treatment for participants needing detoxification services. Preference may be given to vendors with established protocols for effecting such referrals and/or formal arrangements with existing local or regional inpatient treatment providers/facilities. Inpatient treatment, itself, will not be covered under the scope of any contract awarded through this RFP.*

- a. **If vendor is expected to suggest participants be referred to inpatient drug treatment or detoxification sites, please identify who will be financially responsible for the participant's care in such a program.**
- b. **Perry County remains one of the poorest counties in Alabama, and a proposer seeks to enhance conditions in the area, if and when possible. Since participants will be referred to the PREP Center from various counties throughout the State, possibly without payor sources for services, emergency inpatient detoxification services (including ambulance transportation to the hospital) will be funded by Perry County's indigent care funds. Since we do not intend to cause financial hardships in the County, please consider funding inpatient detoxification services.**

**RESPONSE:**

- a. **The participant or his health coverage provider would be responsible for the costs of care in an inpatient drug treatment or detoxification program.**
- b. **Funding is not currently available for ABPP to fund inpatient detoxification services.**

15. Reference *Request for Proposal: C. Description of Required Services*, page 9:

*Accepted standards regarding counselor/group ratio should be observed. The Department of Mental Health mandates certain requirements for these positions and the vendor will be responsible for compliance.*

**Please provide the Department of Mental Health mandates regarding staffing levels, participant ratios, and credentials of personnel performing assessments.**

**RESPONSE:**

**Vendor is expected to comply with any applicable staffing levels, participant ratios, and credentials that may be required by the Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH). Such information may be obtained through ADMH.**

16. Reference *Request for Proposal: C. Description of Required Services*, page 10:

*Data Collection. The vendor must be capable of collecting and providing, for analysis, certain data to measure program performance. The vendor will be required to coordinate with ABPP to determine what specific data metrics will be needed/collected and to establish and comply with the process for transferring data to ABPP. Vendor must also be responsible for supplying the Department of Mental Health certain statistical data as required to meet and maintain certification responsibilities.*

- a. Please identify the “certain statistical data” that will be requested by the Department of Mental Health.**

**RESPONSE:**

**ADMH may request such information such as how many participants are provided services, how assessments are conducted, and what type of services are provided. Vendor is expected to comply with ADMH rules and requests for such data and any other data that may be required in accordance with rules, policies and procedures of ADMH.**

17. Reference *Request for Proposal: D. Information Required from Proposers (Vendors)*, page 11:

*The vendor must be certified through the Department of Mental Health to provide substance abuse treatment services. The vendor shall submit evidence of such certification along with its proposal.*

- a. Please allow a vendor who is not certified through the Department of Mental Health to offer services.**
- i. If Department of Mental Health certification is required, please allow time after contract award for the vendor to complete the certification process.**
- ii. Please confirm the ABPP will allow a proposer to submit an out of**

**state license as demonstration of the vendor's capability to secure ADMH licensure/certification.**

**RESPONSE:**

- a.i. Vendor will be allowed time to complete the ADMH certification process to the extent it does not unduly and unreasonably interfere with PREP Center operations.
- a.ii. Proposer will be allowed to submit an out of state license as demonstration of vendor's capability to secure ADHM licensure/certification.

18. Reference *Request for Proposal: D. Information Required from Proposers (Vendors)*, page 12:

*Discuss any limits or prohibitions to the vendor participation by participants and requirements of discharge.*

- a. **Please provide clarity on what the ABPP is expecting in response to this request.**

**RESPONSE:**

**There is no expected response. Vendor should determine based upon its proposal, capacities, organizational strengths and weaknesses, and understanding of the required scope of services at the PREP Center any limitations it has on the provision of care to participants and participant discharge decisions taking into consideration aspects of participant recovery and follow up care.**

19. Reference *Request for Proposal: D. Information Required from Proposers (Vendors)*, page 13:

*Address a plan for handling residents identified as posing a potential threat of harm to themselves or others, including referral and access to inpatient mental health treatment as deemed appropriate. The vendor must possess adequate resources to implement the same, including immediate placement in a crisis center. The Board anticipates a need for approximately 5% of its treatment population to require referrals for inpatient treatment per fiscal year.*

- a. **Please indicate if the "5%" refers to both inpatient detoxification services and inpatient mental health treatment.**
- b. **If a participant is admitted to a local inpatient unit for detoxification or mental health treatment, please confirm:**
  - i. **Time spent in inpatient treatment is not counted towards the 90-days participants are expected to reside in the PREP Center.**

- ii. **The Psychological Services vendor is not responsible for funding inpatient treatment.**

**RESPONSE:**

- a. **5% refers to inpatient mental health treatment only.**
- b.i. **Whether or not time spent in inpatient treatment counts toward the 90-day residence period depends upon the circumstances of participation. If a court or the Board of Pardons and Paroles orders participation, the time will count. If a participant participates pursuant to agreement, it may not count.**
- b.ii. **The vendor would not be responsible for funding inpatient detoxification or mental health treatment, except for mental health emergencies.**

20. Reference *Request for Proposal: D. Information Required from Proposers (Vendors)*, page 13:

*The vendor will be tasked with making treatment referrals for participants with mental illness and/or mental health related issues, including but not limited to: (1) treatment with a psychiatrist that holds a license as a medical doctor in the State of Alabama and is otherwise qualified to practice psychiatry in the State of Alabama and (2) scheduling psychiatric appointments for participants with a psychiatrist. Telehealth/Telepsychiatry services may be provided. The participant is responsible for treatment costs.*

- a. **Will all participants be enrolled on Medicaid or under their own insurance prior to referral to the PREP Center?**
  - i. **If not, how does ABPP anticipate medication and any outside hospital costs to be covered?**

**RESPONSE:**

- a. **No.**
- a.i. **The Participant or his/her health insurance/coverage provider would be responsible for the costs, unless another source of funding can be identified to cover the costs.**

21. Reference *Terms and Conditions: B. Submission of Proposals:*

*The vendor must provide along with the proposal an up-to-date resume of any individual, including any subcontractors, who would be performing services under any executed contract.*

- a. **Please confirm vendors may submit Job Descriptions for proposed personnel in lieu of resumes, as staff will need to be onboarded for operation of this contract.**

**RESPONSE:**

- a. **The vendor may submit job descriptions for proposed personnel in lieu of resumes with an explanation of why resumes could not be submitted.**

22. Reference *Terms and Conditions: F. Clarifications and Suspected Errors in RFP:*

*It is the responsibility of all interested vendors to monitor this webpage for announcements regarding this RFP. The deadline for submitting such questions is 4:00 p.m. CST on Thursday, July 14, 2022. ABPP's response to questions will be provided no later than 4:00 p.m. CST on Wednesday, July 20, 2022.*

- a. **Please offer Proposers a second round of questions to respond to and capture any material information that results from the ABPP's answers to this round of questions.**
- b. **Please extend the Submission of Proposals deadline to at least 10-business days following ABPP's response to questions to ensure Proposers have sufficient time to understand answers to questions, operationally plan to develop an offering that aligns with the answers and project a Budget.**

**RESPONSE:**

**ABPP will not extend the question submission deadline or proposal submission deadline. A second round of questions beyond the current published deadline for submitting questions will not be allowed.**

23. Reference *Terms and Conditions: L. Award of Contract:*

*A standard agency contract will be required. Standard agency acknowledgement forms will be required for any individual associated with the successful vendor to perform services under an executed contract.*

- a. **Please provide a sample contract.**
- b. **Please clarify if "standard agency contract" is a separate document. If it is a separate document, please provide a copy.**

**RESPONSE:**

- a. **A sample contract is attached which generally contains terms of a standard agency professional services contract.**

- b. **The attached sample contract is a standard agency contract but may not include all terms that may be negotiated or required by state rules, policies or procedures.**

24. Reference *Terms and Conditions: N. Evaluation and Selection:*

*After the evaluation of proposals received and selection of the successful vendor, the selection and the award will be posted on the agency's website.*

- a. **The following website (<https://paroles.alabama.gov/resources/requests-for-proposal/>) includes an “Awarded” field, but it only identifies the solicitation number, not the selection of the successful vendor. Please specify where the notification of award will be published.**

**RESPONSE:**

**The notification of award to successful proposer will be made by letter to all proposers and a general notification of award will be posted on the Board’s website at <https://paroles.alabama.gov/resources/requests-for-proposal/>**

25. Reference *Terms and Conditions: O. Evaluation Criteria: Proposed Budget (40%).*

- a. **To ensure the ABPP receives the most competitive and sustainable proposals, please specify the budgeted funds allocated to Psychological Services at the PREP Center.**

**RESPONSE:**

**No funds have been specifically allocated for Psychological Services at the PREP Center at this time. The amount of funds allocated for psychological services depend, at least in part, on the cost of the winning proposal.**