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RESPONSE TO
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)
RFI No. OCS-LBR903-03_17-RFI_2

The Office of Community Services (OCS) conducted an informational meeting on Wednesday, April 26, 2017 regarding RFI No. OCS-LBR903-03_17-RFI_2, seeking additional information to improve the approach for Employment Services for Low Income People (ES/LIP) and Employment Services for Legal Permanent Residents (ES/LPR) to best utilize the funding available to meet the needs of the target community, maximize the desired outcomes, and improve coordination with other related programs. Ten questions were raised during the RFI orientation and submitted by various agencies. The responses to those questions are as follows:

Question 1:

Would OCS consider allowing agencies who want to apply for both ES/LIP and ES/LPR to submit one proposal rather than two separate proposals? There would be a lot of redundancy between the two programs.

Answer 1:

Proposals for ES/LIP and ES/LPR are being requested with a single RFP. Providers may apply for either or both programs in a single proposal.

Question 2:

Please clarify what you mean by "Each county has a base of \$50,000 per program". Does that mean, for each county, each program will automatically receive \$50,000 to cover base cost and the remainder will need to be earned?

Answer 2:

In allocating funding to the geographic counties, a base (minimum) of \$50,000 was allocated to each county for each program to enable each county to be provided a minimum level of services. The remaining funds were allocated based on the US Census Small Area Income Poverty Estimate for Hawaii.

Question 3:

Under Milestone 2b, there is language on providing advances to participants for tuition subsidy.

Is this a requirement for the program?

Will OCS reimburse the funds to the provider?

Answer 3:

If a provider chooses to provide cash advances to program participants for tuition subsidy (Milestone 2b), the State will reimburse the provider for up to \$1,000 of the vocational training tuition upon successful completion of the program. The provider will not be required to provide cash advances to program participants.

Question 4:

Regarding the Vocation Training: The RFI specifies that only third party training is allowed. What if the service provider offers a nationally-recognized training that no other training institute in Hawaii offers; will this be considered?

Answer 4:

The objective of Milestone 2b is to provide vocational training enabling the program participant to obtain employment. In the past, the training needed to be provided by a certified third party. However, applicant-provided training options that have proven to be effective may be used under Milestone 2b.

Question 5: The documentation required for vocational training reimbursement includes a completion certification. What if the participant enrolled in a vocational training program but did not complete the training? For most training institutes, including community colleges, a refund is not granted once the class starts and the individual subsequently drops out.

Answer 5:

Under Milestone 2b, expenses for vocational training will only be reimbursed once the participant has finished the training program. The program participant will not be reimbursed by the provider if they do not complete the training program.

Question 6:

Are the minimum hours outlined in Milestone 2a necessary for cash reimbursement?

Answer 6:

The payment for Milestone 2a is based on the minimum hours outlined in the description for this milestone. Providers may propose a different service and payment approach to provide case management and coaching to facilitate employment.

Question 7:

Can the reporting be changed from monthly to quarterly?

Answer 7:

Yes. Program reports and payment requests need to be submitted at the same time.

Question 8:

Will OCS consider reimbursing for citizenship and airfare?

Answer 8:

OCS's programs have been focused on facilitating employment to increase economic self-sufficiency. Citizenship is not a requirement for employment. Thus, OCS has not paid for citizenship applications or airfare.

Question 9:

Does ES/LPR only service immigrants who have been here for five years or less?

Answer 9:

ES/LPR will only service immigrants who have been here for five years or less. If an individual is an immigrant who has been here for more than five years, they may participate in ES/LIP which

helps low-income population regardless of their citizenship and time since entering the United States of America.

Question 10:

Will OCS consider increasing the cost per participant?

Answer 10:

After reviewing the investment per participant, OCS has increased to estimated investment per participant to \$2,300 for ES/LIP and \$3,200 for ES/LPR. Please note that this is an estimated investment per participant. Providers will be asked to propose a service model, including associated costs, which will result in participants successfully obtaining employment.