

STATEMENT OF WORK

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Long Beach Healthcare System (VALBHS), 5901 E. 7th Street, Long Beach, CA 90822, Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is seeking the services of a qualified organization/institution, herein referred to as the Contractor, who shall to provide employees and eligible family members with a broad range of counseling services for any personal or work-related conflict or concern.

This is a five-year contract with option years to extend.

1. BACKGROUND:

It is the policy of the Federal Government to offer appropriate prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation programs and services for employees with alcohol and/or drug problems. To the extent feasible, agencies are encouraged to extend services to families of alcohol and/or drug abusing employees and to employees who have eligible family members who have alcohol and/or drug problems. Executive Order 12564, 51 Federal Regulation 32889 (Sept. 15, 1986) establishes standards for a Drug-Free Federal Workplace and requires agencies to have Employee Assistance Programs providing assessment, counseling, referral for treatment or rehabilitation, as appropriate. Short-term counseling and referral services that include education and coordination with community resources constitute the appropriate prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation services for alcohol and drug abuse in accordance with these requirements. The Department of Veterans Affairs has therefore established an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to provide alcohol, drug and other counseling services to its employees and their eligible family members for personal or work-related concerns.

2. SCOPE:

The objective of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is to address such problems in the quickest, least restrictive, most convenient, and cost-efficient manner while strictly respecting the confidentiality between the VALBHS employees and the Contractor's counseling staff. The Contractor shall provide employees and eligible family members with a broad range of counseling services for any personal or work-related conflict or concern. The range of concerns to be covered includes any emotional, behavioral, mental or personal concern, especially those related to alcohol or drug abuse, which may adversely impact on the employee's job performance, attendance, or conduct.

The Contractor shall provide high quality services that are customer and client friendly to assist managers, supervisors, and union representatives to improve employee job

performance. The Contractor shall provide support to help address organizational situations having a detrimental effect on employees.

3. EAP SERVICES:

The Contractor shall provide the necessary personnel, equipment, supplies and support services to perform the EAP services. The Contractor shall be required to provide support services and referral assessment sessions per problem type each year to employees and eligible family members for the following:

- a. Marriage, family and relationship problems
- b. Eldercare/childcare referral
- c. Alcohol and drug abuse, and co-dependency issues
- d. Emotional, psychological and psychiatric problems
- e. Physical concerns
- f. Legal problems
- g. Financial and credit problems
- h. Work-related issues
- i. Social services

The types of communication materials the Contractor shall provide are, but not limited to the following:

- a. Informational brochures highlighting EAP topics of interest
- b. Posters
- c. Newsletters
- d. Online resources
- e. Program introduction letter to the customer agency
- f. Quarterly reports of utilization

The Contractor shall provide EAP services utilizing telephone and local in-person assessment, counseling/problem solving, educational and motivational activities, referral, monitoring, behavioral health consultation, and follow-up services at a mutual agreeable time between the counselor and the employee and/or their eligible family member. All face-to-face services shall be provided at secure, confidential, smoke-free, location accessible to the physically challenged. Appointments shall be offered at times and locations convenient and accessible to the employees and/or their family member. Counseling shall be available by telephone 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. Telephone counseling is not an acceptable substitute to in-person counseling for employees unless requested or agreed to by the employee or family member. Each employee shall receive 4 free sessions with a license therapist.

4. MONITOR EMPLOYEE PROGRESS

The Contractor shall develop for use by the counselor(s) a method of monitoring the employee's progress in and cooperation with the recommended course of action, referral, or treatment. Where appropriate and allowed by the confidentiality requirements, the counselor shall also apprise the referring management official of the employee's progress in treatment, assisting in job adjustment.

5. RECORD SYSTEM

The Contractor shall plan, develop, use, maintain, and manage a record system in accordance with applicable laws and regulations relating to alcohol and drug prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation; the Privacy Act of 1974; and other applicable laws, regulations, and guidelines governing confidentiality of counseling and medical records.

6. CASE FILES

The Contractor shall be responsible for maintaining complete, individual case files for each employee or family member entering the program. Said records shall be maintained in accordance with the requirements of Privacy Act and Pub. L. 93-282 and the applicable implementing laws and regulations. All records of the EAP are considered to be under the jurisdiction of the Department of Veterans Affairs and maintained by the designated Human Resources (HR) representative. Upon termination of this contract, for whatever reason, the records shall be surrendered to the designated HR representative.

7. REPORTING

The Contractor shall submit quarterly status and statistical reports to the designated HR representative on all active cases, including information on the number of employees counseled, classification of problem, family involvement, and case disposition. No individual employee-identifying information shall be contained in these reports. The Contractor shall also submit a yearly statistical report. In addition, the Contractor shall be required to submit reports of training sessions held to include a summary of the training material covered and the number of employees and supervisors who attended the training.

8. QUALITY ASSURANCE

Handouts and any critical debriefings sessions shall be provided by HR. Because of the necessity to maintain confidentiality for the counseling sessions, the VALBHS shall rely on any complaints that may be voluntarily received concerning the counseling sessions.

Human Resources shall share these complaints with the Contractor. Repeat complaints shall record into the contract file and used for evaluating Contractor performance at the end of the contract term or may result in contract termination.

9. DELIVERY

PROGRAM INITIATION AND TRANSITION

VALBHS recognizes that EAP services are vital to the agency and must be continued without interruption. The Contractor shall be expected to coordinate a smooth transition without disrupting any service to the employees to another Contractor if necessary. The Contractor shall use professional judgment and standards of the industry for the handling of case files, clients and changes to the EAP program during the transition from the current Contractor. The Contractor shall, immediately upon award of the contract, contact the designated HR Representative to arrange to assume operation of the EAP contract upon expiration of the existing contract.

Within the first 30 calendar days of service, the Contractor shall provide written informational material for all VALBHS employees regarding the availability of the counseling program and how to obtain services. This shall include pamphlets/handouts, posters, wallet cards and other forms of publicity for EAP services to help employees stay informed. Newsletters and other educational materials shall be made available for distribution to employees within 30 days of service and quarterly thereafter.

At the end of this Contract, if deemed necessary by the Government (designated HR representative), the Contractor shall provide similar transition planning and cooperation to the successor Contractor (refer to Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Clause 52.237-3 Continuity of Services).

10. TRAINING

Within the first 60 days, the Contractor shall provide training sessions to supervisors and other key management personnel within the VALBHS. Such training shall be designed to help management officials use the program effectively in the performance of their responsibilities. Managers shall be encouraged to use the EAP as a preventative measure and shall receive training on specific ways to manage marginal employees and employees experiencing problems. Training for managers and supervisors shall normally last up to 4 hours with an all-employee orientation lasting 1 hour. Videotapes and printed materials that may be used for training of managers, supervisors, and employees shall be made available to the Human Resources representative for use within the VALBHS. The Contractor shall also develop a 30-minute DVD describing in detail how the EAP operates, including the problems it is equipped to handle, the referral system and costs to the employee. This video shall be provided for each employer location for viewing by employees as needed.

The training for supervisors shall include the following topics:

- a) Description and philosophy of the EAP and how the EAP can help both supervisors and employees
- b) Availability of advice and consultation services for supervisors who must deal with a troubled or affected employee
- c) Definition of a troubled/affected employee and typical signs and symptoms associated with such an employee as well as the prevalence and kinds of personal problems a supervisor might encounter in the workplace
- d) Types and effects of drugs, symptoms of drug use and related treatment and rehabilitation programs
- e) The supervisor's role in dealing with a troubled/affected employee and referral techniques, the importance of documenting work performance or conduct problems or deterioration, and how to confide in the employee
- f) Self-vs. management referral processes and procedures for referrals to the EAP
- g) Client privacy and confidentiality regulations, use of a consent form, etc.
- h) Method of providing feedback to referring officials on employee's progress
- i) Relationship of the counseling to the VA Long Beach Healthcare System's disciplinary program
- j) The procedures for coping with a traumatic incident

EAP orientations for employees shall include:

- a) Description and philosophy of the EAP
- b) Prevalence and kinds of personal problems
- c) Symptoms of work performance deterioration or conduct problems
- d) How the EAP can help and how to seek assistance
- e) Confidentiality and that service are at no cost to employee

The Contractor shall provide the training sessions described herein with all necessary training materials. Training shall be designed to help the attendees access the program effectively. All of the courses delivered by the Contractor are subject to the approval of the designated HR representative prior to presentation. The training sessions shall be held at the VALBHS location.

The Contractor shall provide educational presentations at times and locations specified by the designated HR representative to inform and educate employees on matters that shall help them manage their lives more effectively. Topics shall include but not limited to alcoholism, stress management, caring for aging relatives, etc.

11. COUNSELORS/STAFFING

The Contractor shall provide adequate qualified staffing with consultative and presentation skills to allow for case acceptance on a 24-hour-a-day, 7 day-a-week basis, to meet the regular and emergency needs of all VALBHS employees and family members.

The Contractor shall be responsible for the ongoing recruitment and retention of a dedicated, full-time professional staff that is reflective of the general gender and diversity of the VALBHS employee population, to the extent reasonably possible. VALBHS employees and their family members speak many different languages as their primary language. To facilitate communication with callers and clients, the Contractor shall provide EAP Counselors who are fluent in a variety of languages. The Contractor shall have a staffing program in place to provide qualified and experienced counselors to serve the VALBHS diverse employee base and their families.

Counselors shall provide direct, in-person counseling to employees and family members as appropriate. The counselor's activities shall be directed toward initial evaluation and, when necessary, referral of the client to his or her community or other resources for appropriate and skilled management of the problems presented. Therefore, the Contractor must develop and maintain close working relationships with community or other resources offering treatment and rehabilitative assistance. Counselors must possess the skills necessary to enable them, through interviewing, to determine the nature of the client's problem(s). If necessary, the counselor may also recommend the client undergo further medical and/or diagnostic evaluation.

12. QUALIFICATIONS OF PRINCIPLE AND ASSOCIATE COUNSELORS:

Measures of qualifications should include evidence of specialized understanding of alcohol and other drug problems and Certified Employee Assistance Professional (CEAP) or other nationally recognized EAP certification. At a minimum, counselors shall have a Master's degree in social work, counseling, psychology, public health or other employee assistance-related field. In addition, counselors must have at least two years post-degree experience in the EAP field. EAP professionals shall adhere to all government regulations regarding their scope of practice. Individual EAP professionals are responsible for recognizing the limitations of their competence and making certain that all work is performed within those limitations. The offeror's proposal shall provide a detailed plan for providing required services. Also, the Contractor shall provide the names and resumes of the qualified individuals who shall be working on this contract as

key personnel. The Contractor shall make no substitutions of key personnel without obtaining approval in advance.

For management referrals the Contractor's counselors should:

- a) Interview management officials, as requested by the VALBHS, HR staff, and provide them with guidelines in confronting employees with job performance or behavior problems.
- b) Advise management officials regarding client confidentiality requirements.
- c) Interview the employee and, with the employee's knowledge and written consent, obtain the appropriate information including medical history, if necessary, to determine the nature of the employee's problem and recommend sources for referral.
- d) Determine the nature of the problem.
- e) After professional assessment of the case, advise the employee of appropriate and available community treatment resources, help make arrangements for their utilization, and encourage the employee to participate in a rehabilitative program, if appropriate.
- f) Secure a written release from the employee to provide appropriate feedback to the supervisor and HR staff.
- g) Maintain ongoing contact with both the employee and the community treatment/resource program to which he/she is referred.
- h) Inform the employee that it is his/her responsibility to pay for any referral services, rehabilitation, or treatment program.
- i) Maintain familiarity with current provisions of Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) plans and the health plans available to the VALBHS non-federal staff in order to provide counseled employees with information relative to available options and/or benefits.
- j) Throughout the treatment program and as allowed by the confidentiality requirements, be available to 1) the supervisor and VALBHS, HR staff to discuss rehabilitative efforts and their relationship to job performance; 2) the family; 3) and other treatment resources for maintenance of a well-coordinate rehabilitation program.

For employee-initiated referrals:

- a) When an employee self-refers to the program, he/she shall receive counseling and, if necessary, shall be referred to community resources or facilities for such assistance as is deemed appropriate or necessary.

b) In such self-referring situations, the confidentiality requirements shall be strictly observed. The employee shall not ordinarily be asked to sign a consent releasing information to his/her supervisor.

c) If an employee drops out of a treatment program, the case file should be so documented; no further action shall take place.

Should a self-referral case be in progress and the counselor is consulted by the employee's supervisor about deteriorating performance, the counselor shall confer with the supervisor, but shall adhere strictly to the confidentiality requirements giving no indication of the employee's previous self-referral. The employee may then, if appropriate, be contacted and advised of the potential need to sign consent to release information to the supervisor.

13. GOVERNMENT-FURNISHED PROPERTY

There will be no government property furnished in the performance of this contract.

14. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE

The services to be provided under this contract shall be accomplished at the mutual agreeable location between the counselor and the employee and/or their eligible family member. Telephone access to qualified counselors shall be provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Contractor shall provide a qualified counselor to respond to these calls.