

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Justification and Approval (J&A) For Other Than Full and Open Competition (>SAT)

Acquisition Plan Action ID: 36C258-18-AP-0762

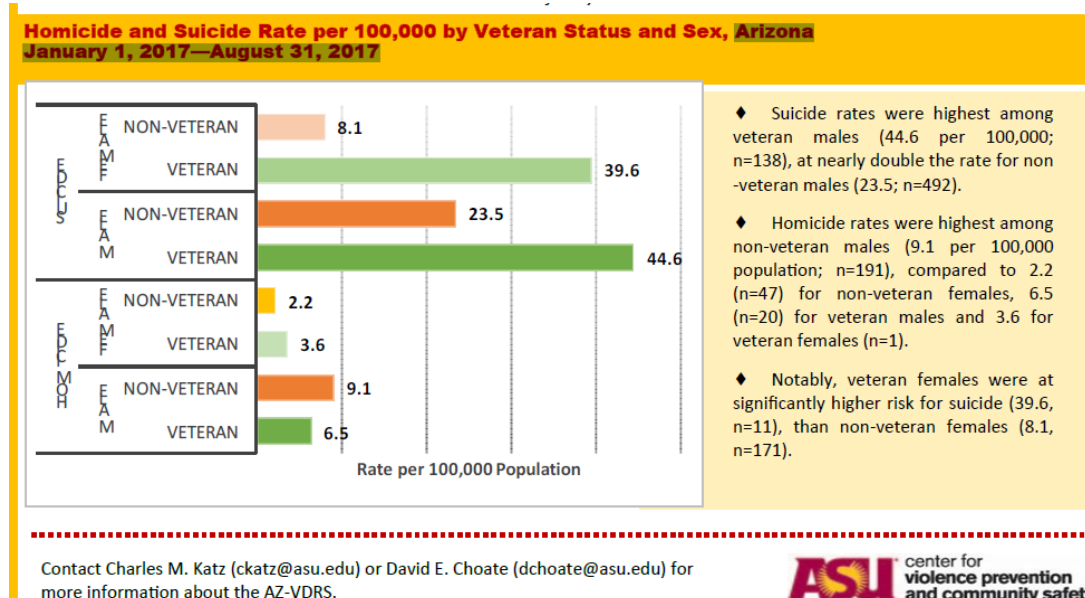
1. **Contracting Activity:** Department of Veterans Affairs, VISN 22, Network Contracting Office 22 on behalf of the Phoenix VA Health Care System (PVAHCS).

Purchase request# 644-18-4-1819-0264.

2. **Nature and/or Description of the Action Being Processed:** The PVAHCS requires a sole source contract with Technical Assistance Program – Arizona (TAP-AZ) to provide immediate Suicide Prevention services consistent with the Clay Hunt Be-Connected Program to address and mitigate the rising suicide rate amongst Veterans throughout the state of Arizona.
3. **Description of Supplies/Services Required to Meet the Agency's Needs:** The contractor shall provide Suicide Prevention services to any VA eligible Veteran throughout the state of Arizona. Specific services shall include outreach to vulnerable veterans using peer support specialists and navigators, transportation to community programs, and a 24/7 call center where Veterans or their family members can seek guidance on available resources. The contractor shall a) conduct an outreach campaign; b) connect Veterans to the right resources and level of care at the right time according to their situation and specific needs; c) respond effectively by using specific training and response protocols; d) staff the project with a cadre of community based Veteran Peer Support Specialists and Navigators and e) gather baseline and on-going data, continually evaluate impact, adapt the program accordingly and disseminate the information as directed by the VA. This requirement is emergent as the suicide rate amongst Veterans in Arizona is significantly higher than the national Veteran and non-Veteran averages and the trend since 2015 indicates an increase in suicides (see enclosed statistics from 2015 and 2017). These facts contributed to PVAHCS's selection in **July 2018** to become a partner in the VA's expansion of the Clay Hunt Community Outreach Pilot program. The program is in response to Public Law No 114-2, Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/203>). PVAHCS's selection as a partner in the Clay Hunt Be-Connected program included Fiscal Year 2018 funding provided by VA Central Office Medical Services to ensure that these critical and life-saving services could begin immediately.
4. **Statutory Authority Permitting Other than Full and Open Competition:**
 - () (1) Only One Responsible Source and No Other Supplies or Services Will Satisfy Agency Requirements per FAR 6.302-1;
 - (x) (2) Unusual and Compelling Urgency per FAR 6.302-2;
 - () (3) Industrial Mobilization, Engineering, Developmental or Research Capability or Expert Services per FAR 6.302-3;
 - () (4) International Agreement per FAR 6.302-4
 - () (5) Authorized or Required by Statute FAR 6.302-5;
 - () (6) National Security per FAR 6.302-6;
 - () (7) Public Interest per FAR 6.302-7;

5. **Demonstration that the Contractor's Unique Qualifications or Nature of the Acquisition Requires the Use of the Authority Cited Above (applicability of authority):**

Suicide prevention services are required immediately in order to mitigate the number of Veteran deaths by suicide and attempted suicides throughout the state of Arizona, which are amongst the highest in the U.S. TAP-AZ is uniquely qualified to provide these critical suicide prevention services because they currently provide these services now. The services they deliver are consistent with the Be-Connected program and are in coordination with community partners, DOD, AZ National Guard/Reserve and all three VAMC's within the State of Arizona that include the state and local political representatives. TAP-AZ also oversees a call center that is imbedded within the States Crisis Response Network (CRN) system. Their call center has provided resource referrals to 4,000 Veterans and has trained over 3,000 individual Peer Navigators from community partner agencies, VSO's and other organizations around the state of Arizona. They currently operate throughout the state of Arizona helping to identify Veterans and DOD military personnel in the prevention of suicide by linking them to needed VAMC care and referrals to community resource services. A snapshot from the Arizona State University Center for Violence Prevention and Community Safety below provides evidence of the alarming statistics pertaining to Veteran deaths by Suicide:



6. **Description of Efforts Made to ensure that offers are solicited from as many potential sources as deemed practicable:**

Due to the emergent nature of this requirement, no other organizations shall be solicited. Market research concludes that TAP-AZ is uniquely qualified and capable of providing these critical and emergent services in the immediate future.

7. Determination by the CO that the Anticipated Cost to the Government will be Fair and Reasonable:

TAP-AZ already has the infrastructure in place (e.g. call center, trained personnel, presence throughout the state of Arizona). Therefore, the main cost to the contractor is for labor, estimated at 24 personnel (Peer Support Specialists, Navigators, Call Center, Management) making approx. \$65,000.00 per year (or \$32,500 for 6 months X 24 = \$780,000.00); with an additional \$220,000 for a six-month period for space, equipment, transportation for Veterans and other administrative costs. The total estimated for a 6-month period is \$1.0M (\$780,000.00 (labor) + \$220,000.00 (Operations) = \$1.0M).

8. Description of the Market Research Conducted and the Results, or a Statement of the Reasons Market Research Was Not Conducted:

PVAHCS social work staff conducted market research when funding became available for this requirement. They used six (6) criteria that an awardee must be able to immediately offer: Peer Navigation services, a high level of VA and community collaboration, Call Center Operations, Community provider Peer Navigation training, existing public and private partnerships that includes military organizations, and the ability to coordinate statewide suicide prevention services. Technical Assistance Program - Arizona currently has this capability as they are already a key member of the Clay Hunter Be Connected program through their affiliation with the Arizona Coalition for Military Families (see enclosed). No other market research was conducted due to the emergent nature of this requirement and the fact that TAP-Z is uniquely qualified to provide the services immediately.

9. Any Other Facts Supporting the Use of Other than Full and Open Competition:

In July 2018, PVAHCS was selected to be a partner in the expansion of the Clay Hunt Community Outreach Pilot program and VA Central Office Medical Services provided FY18 funds to immediately implement the program.

10. Listing of Sources that Expressed, in Writing, an Interest in the Acquisition: None

11. A Statement of the Actions, if any, the Agency May Take to Remove or Overcome any Barriers to Competition before Making subsequent acquisitions for the supplies or services required:

Acquisition procedures to establish a long-term contract for Suicide Prevention services will commence in October 2018. The estimated cost of a base and four one-year options is \$10.0M and will require extensive planning. This short-term sole source will ensure that Veterans contemplating suicide are provided the resources they need now to address their mental health issues.

12. **Requirements Certification:** I certify that the requirement outlined in this justification is a Bona Fide Need of the Department of Veterans Affairs and that the supporting data under my cognizance, which are included in the justification, are accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Cheryl S Black
199907
Cheryl Black
Administrative Officer
PVAHCS

Digitally signed by Cheryl S Black
199907
Date: 2018.09.19 07:01:22 -0700

13. **Approvals in accordance with the VHAPM Part 806.3 OFOC SOP:**

- a. **Contracting Officer or Designee's Certification (required):** I certify that the foregoing justification is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sandra L. Fusco
Contracting Officer
SAO-West, Network Contracting Office-22

- b. **One Level Above the Contracting Officer (Required over SAT but not exceeding \$700K):** I certify the justification meets requirements for other than full and open competition.

Chelsea Black
Chief, Division I
SAO-West, Network Contracting Office-22

- c. **VHA SAO HCA Review and Approval:** I have reviewed the foregoing justification and find it to be complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief and recommend approval (if over \$68 million) or approve (\$700K to \$68 million) for other than full and open competition.

Curtis M. Jordan
Acting Executive Director, SAO-West
Head of Contracting Activity (HCA)