



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 16-544A, **Version:** 1

Subject:

Sole source contract with 2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares, Inc. for administration of the Emergency Financial Assistance for Adults Program.

Recommended Action:

Approve the sole source contract with 2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares, Inc. (211) for administration of the Emergency Financial Assistance for Adults Program (AEFAP)

Contract No. 156-0250-SS(JA) in the amount of \$9,064,640.00 for a five year term expiring September 30, 2021.

Strategic Plan:

Ensure Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

2.2 Be a facilitator, convener, and purchaser of services for those in need

2.4 Support programs that seek to prevent and remedy the causes of homelessness and move individuals and families from homelessness to permanent housing

Summary:

Approval of this agreement will allow 211 to administer the disbursement of one-time assistance funds for adults without minor children facing a qualifying emergency need. Such need may include:

- past due rent to avoid eviction
- emergency mortgage assistance to reduce the risk of foreclosure
- utility assistance to prevent unhealthy living conditions or eviction
- emergency transportation assistance for work or medical appointments
- work-related expenses that cause unexpected financial hardship.

211 will be responsible for screening applicants, assessing eligibility, collecting documentation for approval and the disbursement of funds. In addition, 211 is expected to maintain the pool of emergency assistance funds, properly invoice for expenses incurred and disbursed, and the recording and reporting of program information and outcomes for County reporting requirements. The County will provide reimbursement of costs on a monthly basis.

Background Information:

On March 24, 2015, the Board of County Commissioners approved a non-competitive agreement with 211 for AEFAP on a "pilot" basis. An initial pilot program report covering the first six (6) months (April 2015-September 2015) of the program listed 509 approved assistance cases with client stories highlighting the importance of the help received. From October 2015 through March 2016, an additional 906 individuals received assistance with 132 individuals successfully transitioning from shelter into permanent housing.

The average time from case initiation to closure in the first year was just under 20 days including intake, time to receive documentation from clients, case decisions, and delivering assistance. Individuals are able to follow-up by email to provide required documentation to enhance accessibility.

During the second quarter (January 2016-March 2016), 211 received 2,197 AEFAP program emails. The most frequent requests have been for rent and utility assistance which has helped to further stability and prevent homelessness. Clients are eligible to receive assistance once over a twelve-month period. Exceptions may be granted on a case-by-case basis depending on the unique situation or crisis.

In the first year of operation, the AEFAP program facilitated over 11,000 program calls. In addition to Emergency Financial Assistance, callers receive navigation and referrals to help meet their needs through 211.

With the initial success of the pilot program, Human Services is seeking to continue to build on the AEFAP model to provide assistance to residents in crisis. 211 has the unique ability to utilize their information system and resource database, and maintains the only free, confidential, multi-lingual, 24-hour hotline for access to community information, services and resources in Pinellas County. 211 also hosts a centralized, private, secure web-based database for health and human service providers to enter, manage and share client information electronically, known as the Tampa Bay Information Network (TBIN).

On February 18, 2016, the Purchasing Department released a notice of intent to procure these services on a sole source basis; no firms responded.

Fiscal Impact:

Estimated annual administration expenditure not to exceed: \$ 412,928.00

Estimated direct service funds expenditure not to exceed: \$1,400,000.00

Estimated annual expenditure not to exceed: \$1,812,928.00

The five (5) year contract total funding amount is \$9,064,640.00 of which \$7,000,000.00 will provide direct assistance to address emergency citizen needs. Funding derived through the Human Services' budget appropriation to provide assistance and homelessness prevention.

Staff Member Responsible:

Lourdes Benedict, Director of Human Services

Joe Lauro, Director of Purchasing

Partners:

211 Tampa Bay Cares

Attachments:

Adult Emergency Financial Assistance Program Funding Agreement