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To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for your recent inquiry about becoming a Broward and/or Palm Beach County Licensed Child Care Agency/Group Home. As of July 1, 2003, the responsibility for contracting of group care services for dependent children has been assigned by the Department of Children & Families (DCF) to ChildNet, the designated lead agency for Community Based Care in Broward and Palm Beach Counties. Please read the following paragraphs carefully as they describe the requirements which must be met in order to operate a group home.

Chapter 65C-14, Florida Administrative Code and Chapter 409.175, Florida Statutes govern Child Caring Agency operation. In addition, Chapter 435 Florida Statutes provides background-screening requirements for prospective owners, operators and employees of group homes. **The Florida Statutes and Administrative Codes are accessible through the Internet** (See page 2 of this letter for detailed instructions).

Please find attached to this letter the Guidelines for Community Residential Homes, an application packet containing required forms to be completed and submitted to DCF (A step-by-step guide is located on page 14 within **the Guidelines for Community Residential Homes**) and ChildNet's Policy and Procedure regarding the procurement of new services. It is important that you understand that being licensed as a group home provider does not, in any way, ensure that ChildNet will place dependent children in your facility. ChildNet only places dependent children in group homes operated by providers with whom we have a contract to provide this specific service. However, in unique individual cases additional placement options may be explored provided that an agency has been credentialed through our Network Provider Application and Credentialing process. New contracts for group homes will be issued through a competitive public process and only when a current program must be replaced or staff and stakeholder input indicates a need for new or additional services and the financial resources are available to support that service. If you would like to be notified about future contract procurement opportunities, please contact our Director of Contracts at (954) 414-6000, ext. 3816.

Once again, thank you for your interest in providing care for Broward and Palm Beach's most vulnerable children. If you have questions, concerns or require additional information, please contact us directly at (954) 414-6000, ext. 3816.

Sincerely,

Denesee Rankine-Palmer
Director of Contracts



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To access Florida Administrative Codes and Statutes via the Internet, please follow the instructions below.

(Note: if there are any broken links preventing you from viewing said information, please inform ChildNet's Contracts Department immediately.)

To view **Florida Administrative Codes** governing Child Caring Agencies:

1. Go to <https://www.flrules.org>
2. Search "By Chapter Number", enter **65C-14**
3. Once the new page opens, click on, "VIEW CHAPTER" or "VIEW INDIVIDUAL RULES"

To view Florida Statutes governing Child Caring Agencies:

1. Go to <http://www.flsenate.gov/statutes>
2. Scroll down and click on "**TITLE XXX SOCIAL WELFARE**"
3. Scroll down and click on "**Chapter 409 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE**"
4. Scroll down and click on "**409.175** Licensure of family foster homes, residential child-caring agencies, and child-placing agencies; public records **exemption**"

To view Florida Statute 435 (Background Screening):

1. Go to <http://www.flsenate.gov/statutes>
2. Scroll down and click on "**TITLE XXXI LABOR**"
3. Scroll down and click on "**Chapter 435** EMPLOYMENT SCREENING"

Our Mission:
To protect abused,
abandoned and
neglected children in
the communities
we serve.





Guidelines for Community Residential Homes

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An Overview of the Department of Children and Families Organization

The Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) provide health and social services to people who are elderly, disabled, sick and poor or at-risk. DCF programs include medical care for children and adults through the Medicaid program, alcohol and substance abuse services, other health services, child support enforcement, financial assistance through Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), Food Stamps, job training and help for Floridians age 60 or older and disabled adults of any age. Most services are offered free of charge to eligible people while others are based on ability to pay. Some DCF programs, such as environmental health programs serve all the citizens of Florida.

DCF operates, contracts for and licenses many residential facilities, including hospitals for people with mental illness, facilities for people with developmental disabilities, adult congregate living facilities, training schools for delinquent minors, and group homes and halfway houses for dependent children and adults. The Department licenses nursing homes, foster homes for children and adults, drug treatment centers and other programs.

It is important to note that DCF often does NOT provide services directly, but contracts with for-profit or not for profit providers for housing arrangements for its clients.

Community-Based Care is the Florida Department of Children & Families' overarching strategy to build partnerships in the community, and to positively and significantly impact the outcomes, quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of services in the community. Nationally, there is increased attention to the benefits of a seamless system of services that is community-based, outcome driven, and family focused providing individualized culturally competent service plans for the child and family. This global concern for improved access and enhanced quality through management of outcomes has produced stellar projects. These programs show that children and their families respond more positively with longer lasting outcomes when the services are provided in the community where they live and as close to home as possible.

As of July 1, 2003, contracting group care for dependent children has been transferred from the Department of Children and Families to the designated lead agency for Broward and Palm Beach Counties: ChildNet.

ChildNet, Who We Are...

We are Advocates ...

At ChildNet, we bring together every resource at our disposal to promote the safety and best interest of each child in our care.

We are Leaders ...

ChildNet has been selected to serve as the lead agency to manage Broward and Palm Beach Counties' child welfare system. We fulfill this role in cooperation with a skilled network of service providers and extensive community involvement.

We are Community-Based ...

ChildNet is guided by a board of community leaders, prominent in supporting child welfare issues. Decisions are based on the needs of children in the communities we serve.

We are Focused ...

ChildNet is a private, not for profit organization. Our sole focus is to promote the safety and best interests of children and families in the communities we serve.

We are ChildNet ...

Our mission is to protect abused, abandoned and neglected children in the communities we serve.



Broward County
1100 W. McNab Road,
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33309

Palm Beach County
4100 Okeechobee Blvd.,
West Palm Beach, Florida 33409

www.ChildNet.us

A History of Community-Based Residential Facilities

Following World War II, evidence began to suggest that people often can be helped to overcome developmental, emotional and intellectual deficits if given the appropriate opportunities to do so. Thus, community day programs and outpatient clinics were developed for people who otherwise would have been placed in institutions. These programs and clinics demonstrated that most people could receive more appropriate care in the community than they could in an institution.

With the development of community alternatives came the philosophy of “normalization.” This philosophy maintains that people do best when they remain in as normal an environment as possible. As a reflection of this social philosophy, judicial decisions were made that required government to treat institutionalized people so as to facilitate their return to society. Further, case law was developing that indicated that if confinement was necessary, it must be in the least restrictive setting possible.

The policies of deinstitutionalization and diversion are based on the premise that less restrictive residential settings afford greater opportunity for individualized activities and freedom of choice for residents. Significant evidence demonstrates that institutional care can produce side effects that are often more debilitating than the disorder. Isolation, lack of motivation, dependency and loss of basic social skills have all been seen as the result of institutional placement.

Community-based programs work closely with existing community resources and usually have an informal administrative structure. Community-based programs offer services that facilitate family interaction, give greater access to employment opportunities and increase chance for moving into more independent living or home care. Implicit in the social policy of developing community-based residential facilities are the assumptions that:

- **The individual's ability to cope with the environment will be increased** as his or her ability to control the environment is increased;
- Coping with the environment becomes more effective as increasingly complex behaviors are mastered or regained; and,
- Successful coping with the environment is a function of the degree to which the individual assimilates or re-assimilates cultural standards.

It is helpful at this point to clarify “normalization principle” and “least restrictive environment.” The normalization principle does not imply that clients will become normal in all cases. It simply means that the more a person with special living needs is exposed to the normal environment of society, the more likely the person is to reach a higher level of functioning. Each individual is given structured opportunities to grow to his or her **highest level of ability.** **Some people just cannot compete in today's highly complex and technological society.** However, they can often learn the necessary behavior to cope with the expectations of society and frequently obtain and maintain meaningful employment.

The term “least restrictive environment” is related to the normalization principle. While the legislature has mandated that DCF clients be placed in the least restrictive environment possible,” for some people this means placement in an institution or confinement. For most persons, however, it means living in their own homes, in foster or group homes or in apartments with greater to lesser restrictions as appropriate to meet the individual programmatic needs of residents. For some physically disabled people, a beautiful ranch style home could be too restrictive if it has architectural barriers that prevent moving from place to place in the home or getting into the bathroom.

Simply put, both terms, “normalization” and “least restrictive environment,” must apply to the specific disabilities of the individual and to the degree with which the individual is able to cope with them. *Neither concept provides a license for persons to be placed in settings that are not suitable to their personal needs.* For some, too much freedom can be as detrimental as too little.

Use of Community Residential Homes

The 1975 Florida Legislature indicated in the HRS Reorganization Act (s.20.19, Florida Statutes) that a stated departmental goal is to “prevent or reduce inappropriate institutional care by providing for community-based care, home-based care, or other forms of less intensive care.”

Group and adult foster homes are designed to provide the most homelike environment consistent with a person’s needs. The ideal residence is usually a person’s own home. That is where most DCF clients live, whether mentally ill, elderly, delinquent or dependent or developmentally disabled. But when a person cannot live at home, the choices are: foster homes; small group homes; or large group homes.

Some persons will remain in group homes for the rest of their lives. However, it should be stressed that many who once lived in foster and group homes have gone on to greater independence and higher productivity. When clients must live outside their own homes, ChildNet will try to place them in their own communities. This will allow clients to remain in as familiar an environment as possible and interact with their families and friends as much as possible.

The strength and character of a community can, in part, be measured by the willingness to assume responsibility for its citizens who cannot care for themselves. In a time of competition for limited dollars, it is important that all governing bodies see themselves as part of one community – the State of Florida – in the orderly development of group and foster care facilities.

Characteristics of Community Residential Homes

The characteristics of group homes vary considerably, depending on the type of residents in each home. Staffing requirements are dependent on residents’ needs. Group homes may be operated by not for profit organizations, private for-profit corporations or the state.

While each group home has its own personality and no two are exactly alike, there are certain elements that are important to local planners and the neighbors of such homes. They are: the behavioral characteristics of the residents; the compatibility of the group home with the surrounding community; the type of management of the home; and the availability of managers if a problem should occur.

Behavioral Characteristics of Residents

Since it is impossible to describe the behavioral characteristics of residents of all types of group homes, it is best to think, then, in terms of a scale ranging from no behavior problems to some behavior problems. Regardless of whether a person has few or many behavioral problems, the management of the community residential home should have adequately trained staff to provide constant supervision and control of residents. ChildNet and DCF are committed to providing a meaningful service to citizens living in group homes and protecting the quality of life of the surrounding neighborhood.

Compatibility with Surrounding Community

A community residential home should be appropriate to its surroundings. This includes such considerations as the soundness and appearance of the structure itself, the maintenance of the home inside and out, the upkeep and grooming of the yard, adequate off street parking and the proper handling of trash. There should be no dumpster containers or parking lots in single-family zoned areas.

The buildings must meet the minimum building codes of the community and should be required to meet applicable fire and safety standards. However, the community may not demand unreasonable standards above those required for similar structures in the surrounding neighborhood.

Community residential homes are licensed by DCF staff and the standards and policies of the Department must be maintained if the home is to continue to function as a group home.

Community Residential Home Management

As stated before, community residential homes are operated by not for profit organizations or private for-profit operators. Profit-making corporations tend to operate larger group homes. Homes of more than 14 residents are not included in Chapter 419, F.S.

Planners and decision makers need to know or delegate the responsibility for knowing the managers of group homes and how to communicate with them.

Regardless of the type of management, DCF/ChildNet requires that someone be in charge at all times when the residents are present. This person must be authorized to make decisions. If a resident should run away, get lost or do something unacceptable in the community, the person in charge should be contacted immediately.

It is a policy that local ChildNet staff be on call 24 hours a day to respond to any problems related to clients. Community representatives should obtain from the DCF/ChildNet district office the number(s) of the responsible DCF/ChildNet staff so that they can be contacted when and if necessary.

Barriers to Establishing Community Residential Homes

Neighborhood Resistance

Studies have shown that Florida's citizens support the idea that people should live in the community rather than in institutions whenever possible. Most people interviewed, however, preferred that they live in **someone else's neighborhood**. This inclination was confirmed in a study entitled **"But Not In My Neighborhood."**

Some people will never be persuaded that community residential homes are important to them or might some day be needed for one of their own family members. Others, when educated about the benefits and realistic problems of such facilities, will at least moderate their reactions, if not become advocates for group homes.

Before the state law permitting homes and establishing dispersion requirements, the overdevelopment of group homes in certain neighborhoods occurred in various Florida communities. While this could have been avoided through better mutual cooperation of governing officials and human services professionals, the dispersion requirements of Chapter 419, F.S. will now prevent community residential home clustering.

Although the state law provides for siting of community residential homes without **requiring that provider answer neighbors' questions**, the usual objections should be known and the provider should be able to answer them. Some of the major objections to group homes by neighbors and realistic responses to them are as follows:

- **"The group home will be taken off the ad valorem tax rolls."**

Removal from the tax rolls only occurs when the home is owned by the state or a not for profit corporation. If a home is removed from the tax rolls, several factors should be considered. First, the home still provides jobs for staff. Second, if the group home were to remain on the rolls, the cost of care for residents including property taxes, would still be borne by the state from tax revenues. Third, and most important, as all communities begin to accept the **responsibility for group home's** equitably, no one community will bear loss of ad valorem taxes by their presence.

- **"The group home will reduce the property value of the neighborhood."**

Studies throughout the United States and Canada clearly indicate that this argument is not valid. Obviously it could become a factor if, through fear or anger, neighbors react with **"panic selling."** This can be avoided by DCF and ChildNet providing sufficient monitoring so that neighborhoods can have the confidence that the home will be a credit to the neighborhood.

- **"Vehicular traffic will increase."**

This argument usually only has merit when staff are hired on a shift basis and rotate around the clock. Even then, it is unlikely that vehicular usage would be greater than that of a normal home in which two teenagers reside. Residents of community residential homes rarely have their own automobiles. The facility usually provides a van for transportation of clients when the preferred public transportation cannot be accessed.

- “The clients will pose a threat to our families.”

No studies in Florida have been done that would support or deny this allegation. However, studies done in other states found no increase in crime as the result of group homes being placed in neighborhoods. Moreover, the Department has been placing people in group homes for many years and has concluded that DCF/ChildNet clients create fewer incidents than the overall population. Of course, as is true of any neighborhood, there is no absolute guarantee that such incidents will never happen. However, community residential home residents are often far more closely supervised and their lives more structured than persons living in ordinary situations.

Governmental Barriers

In addition to neighborhood resistance to group homes, development of such facilities has sometimes been difficult because planning and governing bodies have interpreted the function of such homes in ways that restrict their right to exist in a normalizing environment. For example, some local governments have sought to restrict the development of community residential homes by the following:

- Defining “family” to include only blood relations or adoption

This definition automatically prohibits the establishment of group homes in many zoning districts. It is a definition that has intermittently been struck down, upheld and circumvented by the Courts. Where it has been struck down, the primary reason has been that group homes are often more stable and more tranquil than many “blood related” families in many neighborhoods. For example, a family of six with four children ranging in age from 10-18 will often exacerbate traffic congestion of a community far more than a group home because of school, work and extracurricular activities of the children. Furthermore, because of their highly structured environment, the residents of a group home are likely to have their meals together more often than the blood related family and there is less coming and going of residents from the home.

With the passage of the community residential homes law, the definition of family became moot. Community residential homes are simply said to operate as the functional equivalent of a family.

- Classifying group homes as businesses

This decision sometimes results in excluding group homes from districts zoned for single family dwellings. In many residential areas, business activities take place in home whether or not such activities are allowed. Real estate and insurance salespersons, product distributors and others often do at least part of their work out of their homes. With growing energy shortages and the rising cost of doing business, planners are learning that it may be necessary to allow more business to be conducted in residential areas. The test is whether the business impacts negatively on the neighborhood. As

discussed above, a group home is operated very much like the other homes in the area. There is no real justification for prohibiting a group home in a neighborhood because it may be classified as a business.

Under Chapter 419, F.S., homes of 1-6 residents are considered single-family units and noncommercial, for the purposes of local laws and ordinances, and are subject to the same local laws and ordinances applicable to other residential family units in the area in which they are established. With rare exceptions, community residential homes of 7-14 residents are permitted in areas zoned as multi-family.

- o Classifying group homes as institutions

When such a local government determination is made, the owner of the facility is required to incur expenses not necessary for a typical home, such as a sprinkler system (unless required by the State Fire Marshall), wide hallways and added hardware. When it is deemed in the best interest of community home residents, DCF/ChildNet will require the inclusion of these and other items for the protection of its clients.

Calling a facility an institution, when its actual purpose is to be a home, creates a “non-normalizing” environment for the residents and an unnecessary expense to taxpayers. Under Chapter 419, F.S. this barrier is removed.

Even though the above concerns and barriers have prevented the development of some community residential homes, Florida nevertheless has over 1,500 such facilities. Many were established without controversy. If controversy occurs, it usually takes place before the home is established or soon after the facility has opened.

CHAPTER 419

(As of July 1, 2003, contracting group care for dependent children has been transferred from the Department of Children and Families to the designated lead agency for Broward and Palm Beach Counties: ChildNet.)

COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL HOMES

419.001 Site selection of community residential homes.

(1) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(a) **“Community residential home” means a dwelling unit licensed to serve residents who** are clients of the Department of Elderly Affairs, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, the Department of Juvenile Justice, or the Department of Children and Family Services or licensed by the Agency for Health Care Administration which provides a living environment for 7 to 14 unrelated residents who operate as the functional equivalent of a family, including such supervision and care by supportive staff as may be necessary to meet the physical, emotional, and social needs of the residents.

(b) **“Department” means the Department of Children and Family Services.**

(c) "Local government" means a county as set forth in chapter 7 or a municipality incorporated under the provisions of Chapter 165.

(d) "Resident" means any of the following: a frail elder as defined in s. 429.65; a person who has a handicap as defined in s. 760.22(7)(a); a person who has a developmental disability as defined in s. 393.063; a non-dangerous person who has a mental illness as defined in s. 394.455; or a child who is found to be dependent as defined in s. 39.01 or s. 984.03, or a child in need of services as defined in s. 984.03 or s. 985.03.

(e) "Sponsoring agency" means an agency or unit of government, a profit or not for profit agency, or any other person or organization which intends to establish or operate a community residential home.

(2) Homes of six or fewer residents which otherwise meet the definition of a community residential home shall be deemed a single-family unit and a noncommercial, residential use for the purpose of local laws and ordinances. Homes of six or fewer residents which otherwise meet the definition of a community residential home shall be allowed in single-family or multifamily zoning without approval by the local government, provided that such homes shall not be located within a radius of 1,000 feet of another existing such home with six or fewer residents. Such homes with six or fewer residents shall not be required to comply with the notification provisions of this section; provided that, prior to licensure, the sponsoring agency provides the local government with the most recently published data compiled from the licensing entities that identifies all community residential homes within the jurisdictional limits of the local government in which the proposed site is to be located in order to show that no other community residential home is within a radius of 1,000 feet of the proposed home with six or fewer residents. At the time of home occupancy, the sponsoring agency must notify the local government that the home is licensed by the department.

(3)(a) When a site for a community residential home has been selected by a sponsoring agency in an area zoned for multifamily, the agency shall notify the chief executive officer of the local government in writing and include in such notice the specific address of the site, the residential licensing category, the number of residents, and the community support requirements of the program. Such notice shall also contain a statement from the licensing entity indicating the licensing status of the proposed community residential home and specifying how the home meets applicable licensing criteria for the safe care and supervision of the clients in the home. The sponsoring agency shall also provide to the local government the most recently published data compiled from the licensing entities that identifies all community residential homes within the jurisdictional limits of the local government in which the proposed site is to be located. The local government shall review the notification of the sponsoring agency in accordance with the zoning ordinance of the jurisdiction.

(b) Pursuant to such review, the local government may:

1. Determine that the siting of the community residential home is in accordance with local zoning and approve the siting. If the siting is approved, the sponsoring agency may establish the home at the site selected.

2. Fail to respond within 60 days. If the local government fails to respond within such time, the sponsoring agency may establish the home at the site selected.

3. Deny the siting of the home.

(c) The local government shall not deny the siting of a community residential home unless the local government establishes that the siting of the home at the site selected:

1. Does not otherwise conform to existing zoning regulations applicable to other multifamily uses in the area.

2. Does not meet applicable licensing criteria established and determined by the Department, including requirements that the home be located to assure the safe care and supervision of all clients in the home.

3. Would result in such a concentration of community residential homes in the area in proximity to the site selected, or would result in a combination of such homes with other residences in the community, that the nature and character of the area would be substantially altered. A residential home with seven to fourteen people that is located within a radius of 1,200 feet of another existing community residential home in a multifamily zone shall be an over concentration of such homes that substantially alters the nature and character of the area. A home that is located within a radius of 500 feet of an area of single-family zoning substantially alters the nature and character of the area.

(4) All distance requirements in this section shall be measured from the nearest point of the existing home or area of single-family zoning to the nearest point of the proposed home.

(5) If agreed to by both the local government and the sponsoring agency, a conflict may be resolved through informal mediation. The local government shall arrange for the services of an independent mediator or may utilize the dispute resolution process established by a regional planning council pursuant to s. 186.509. Mediation shall be concluded within 45 days of a request therefore. The resolution of any issue through the mediation process shall not alter any person's right to a judicial determination of any issue if that person is entitled to such a determination under statutory or common law.

(6) The department shall not issue a license to a sponsoring agency for operation of a community residential home if the sponsoring agency does not notify the local government of its intention to establish a program, as required by subsection (3). A license issued without compliance with the provisions of this section shall be considered null and void, and continued operation of the home may be discontinued.

(7) A dwelling unit housing a community residential home established pursuant to this section shall be subject to the same local laws and ordinances applicable to other noncommercial, residential family units in the area in which it is established.

(8) Nothing in this section shall be deemed to affect the authority of any community residential home lawfully established prior to October 1, 1989, to continue to operate.

(9) Nothing in this section shall permit persons to occupy a community residential home who would constitute a direct threat to the health and safety of other persons or whose residency would result in substantial physical damage to the property of others.

(10) The siting of community residential homes in areas zoned for single family shall be governed by local zoning ordinances. Nothing in this section prohibits a local government from authorizing the development of community residential homes in areas zoned for single family.

(11) Nothing in this section requires any local government to adopt a new ordinance if it has in place an ordinance governing the placement of community residential homes that meet the criteria of this section. State law on community residential homes has authority over local ordinances, but nothing in this section prohibits a local government from adopting more liberal standards for siting such homes.

Accessing Florida Administrative Codes and Statutes Via the Internet



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1. Go to **<http://www.flsenate.gov/statutes>**
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3. Scroll down and click on "**Chapter 409 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE**"
4. Scroll down and click on "**409.175 Licensure of family foster homes, residential child-caring agencies, and child-placing agencies; public records exemption."**

To view **Florida Statute 435** (Background Screening):

1. Go to **<http://www.flsenate.gov/statutes>**
2. Scroll down and click on "**TITLE XXXI LABOR**"
3. Scroll down and click on "**Chapter 435 EMPLOYMENT SCREENING**"

Steps to Starting Your Group Home

If ChildNet has available the financial resources to support the need for new group home services, then ChildNet will seek to competitively procure it. ChildNet maintains a comprehensive array of services and supports made available to families through a diverse and inclusive network of subcontracted providers. ChildNet competitively procures contracts for client services and any services that relate to the system of care while maintaining an open policy in adding new providers to the network and selecting providers based on their qualifications to provide the proposed services. In addition, ChildNet establishes performance standards for all contracted client services.

New services will be procured, whenever possible, via public and competitive processes including Invitation to Bid (ITB), Invitation to Negotiate (ITN), Requests for Applications (RFA) and Requests for Proposals (RFP). Regardless of the type of "Request" it will be advertised locally and regionally, both electronically and in print. An electronic notice will also be sent to all publicly funded providers of children's services and additionally to those who request to be added to ChildNet's procurement notification list.

Prior to opening a group home, it is highly recommended that an agency or person be selected as a contracted network provider for the new service and have a working agreement with ChildNet initiated through the procurement process. Without this process in place, no guarantee can be made as to the usage of a facility or the financial reimbursement for costs associated with such a facility.

Follow these 7 simple steps to guide you through the process of opening a group home:

Step 1: Thoroughly read the Guidelines for Community Residential Homes.

Step 2: Contact your local municipality's zoning board to determine if your group home's location is allowed.



If your location is not approved by your local zoning department, STOP here.
If you have been granted approval of zoning continue to Step 3.

Step 3: Complete the following two forms (*attached to the end of this packet*):
1) **FORM 1786:** Community Residential Home Dispersion Certification Form

Step 4: Submit the completed **FORM 1786** to:

Florida Department of Children and Families, Community Residential Home Coordinator

Broward County
Family & Community Services Office
1400 W. Commercial Boulevard
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309

Palm Beach County
Family & Community Services Office
111 South Sapodilla Avenue,
West Palm Beach, 33401

Step 5: Request a Health Inspection for your group home to be performed by the Health Department. To schedule an appointment, contact your local Health Department at the following address:

Broward County

Broward County Health Department
2421 SW 6th Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33315

Palm Beach County

Palm Beach County Health Department
800 Clematis Street,
West Palm Beach, FL 33402

Step 6: Request an inspection of your group home by the Fire Marshall of your local municipality. Contact your local fire department for arrangements.

Step 7: Meet the requirements from Chapter 65C-14 (included in the application packet) and obtain pertinent documentation stating requirements have been met. Collect the documentation in a binder to be processed later by the Florida Department of Children and Families.



Stop. If you do not meet the requirements and/or cannot obtain documentation supporting meeting said requirements, you will not be eligible to operate a group home.

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Florida Department of Children and Families

COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL HOMES DETERMINATION OF NEED AND LICENSING STATUS

The following community residential home has applied for licensure by:

- ☐ Florida Department of Children and Families
☐ Agency for Health Care Administration

to operate as a community residential home licensed to serve clients of the department.

Name or Business: _____

Address: _____ **Telephone:** _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Licensed bed capacity: _____

Sponsor: _____

Address: _____ **Telephone:** _____

When licensed, this home will meet the licensing standards of the department for the safe care and supervision of clients under the following rules and regulations:

- ☐ Adult Living Facility – 58A-5, F.A.C.
☐ Adult Foster Home – 58A-14, F.A.C.
☐ Residential Child Care Agency – 65C-14, F.A.C.
☐ Residential Treatment Facility/ADM – 65E-4, F.A.C.
☐ ICF/DD – 65B-38, F.A.C.
☐ Foster Care Facility/DD or Group Home – 65B-6, F.A.C.

Signed: _____

Date: _____



Florida Department of Children and Families

COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL HOMES LOCAL ORDINANCE CERTIFICATION

(6 or fewer residents)

I certify that this community residential home of _____ bed capacity is not located within a 1000 ft. radius of another such home or meets more liberal local ordinances. I understand that the:

- ☐ Florida Department of Children and Families
- ☐ Agency for Health Care Administration
- ☐ Agency for Persons with Disabilities

assumes no financial or other liability in the event an error has been made in calculating, measuring or certifying that this facility meets these dispersion requirements.

(7-14 residents)

I certify that this community residential home _____ bed capacity is not located within a _____ 1200 ft. radius of another such home or within 500 feet of an area zoned single-family or meets more liberal local ordinances. I further certify that notification of intent to establish this facility has been made to the appropriate local government (dated letter attached). I understand that the:

- ☐ Florida Department of Children and Families
- ☐ Agency for Health Care Administration
- ☐ Agency for Persons with Disabilities

assumes no financial or other liability in the event an error has been made in calculating, measuring or certifying that this facility meets these dispersion requirements.

Name or Business: _____

Address: _____ Telephone: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Licensed bed capacity: _____

Sponsor: _____

Address: _____ Telephone: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITIES – In establishing a community residential home, the provider/ sponsor or owner/operator has certain responsibilities under Chapter 419, F.S., and under Chapters 58A-5, 58A-14, 65C-14, and/or 65E-4, F.A.C. The department cannot issue a license or must rescind a license issued to facilities that do not meet the requirements of the statute and rules.

PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Contact the Department of Children and Families regional community residential home coordinator as soon as the decision to look for a site is made in order to check the registry and discuss need for home.
- B. All providers must ensure on form CF 1786 that applicable dispersion requirements have been met.
- C. Providers of homes of 7-14 residents must submit notification to the local government of the selection of site for the community residential home, including:
 - 1. The specific address of the site.
 - 2. The residential licensing category.
 - 3. Number of residents.
 - 4. Community support requirements of the program.
 - 5. Statement from the Department of Children and Families regional managing director (form CF 1786) indicating:
 - a. The need for and the licensing status of the proposed home.
 - b. Specifying how the home meets or will meet applicable licensing criteria for the safe care and supervision of the clients in the home.
- D. Providers of homes of 7-14 residents must ensure that local government notification has been made on form CF 1785. The provider should attached proof of notification (date stamped letter or other document) to form CF 1786. Providers must notify the Department of Children and Families licensing office upon the expiration of 60 days after local government notification if the local government fails to approve or deny the selected site within that time period.

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Policy: Procurement of Program Services

ChildNet Number: CN 015.010

Original Approved Date: June 2, 2003

Policy Revised Date(s): April 20, 2010, May 20, 2010, July 9, 2014

Policy Sunset Date:

COA Standard(s): FIN 5.06, 7.04, HR 3.06, 3.07, RPM 9.01, 9.02, 9.03, NET 2.04, 3.01, 3.02, 3.03, 3.04 NET 4.04, 9.01, 9.02, 10.01, 10.02, 10.03 ASE 3.03, ETH 2.03

Statement of Policy:

ChildNet is dedicated to maintaining a comprehensive array of effective services and supports for abused children and their caregivers, offered by a diverse and qualified network of service providers. Contracted program services are procured in a manner that maximizes their quality and benefit to clients, minimizes the disruption of their delivery and is cost effective. Procurement of these services is guided by a system of uniform purchasing procedures that encourage public confidence by promoting fair and open competition, impartial and well-justified decisions and full consideration of ethical and best practices.

Board Chair's Signature:

Date:

07-29-14

Procedure: Procurement of Program Services

ChildNet Number: CN 015.010

Original Approved Date: June 2, 2003

Procedure Revised Date(s): April 20, 2010, May 20, 2010, November 17, 2010; November 2012, September 11, 2013, July 9, 2014, April 25, 2018

Procedure Sunset Date:

COA Standard(s): FIN 5.06, 7.04, HR 3.06, 3.07, RPM 9.01, 9.02, 9.03, NET 2.04, 3.01, 3.02, 3.03, 3.04 NET 4.04, 9.01, 9.02, 10.01, 10.02, 10.03 ASE 3.03, ETH 2.03

Definitions:

Competitive Solicitation - The process of requesting and receiving two or more sealed bids, proposals, or replies submitted by respondents in accordance with the terms of a competitive process, regardless of the method of procurement.

Electronic Posting - or "electronically post" means the noticing of solicitations, agency decisions or intended decisions, or other matters relating to procurement on a centralized Internet website.

Emergency Purchases - The purchase of services without utilization of a competitive bidding process as necessitated by an immediate risk to clients' health, safety, or well-being.

Exempt Services Purchase - The purchase of services which are not subject to the competitive procurement process due to their exemption status.

Invitation to Bid (ITB) - A formal procurement solicitation for competitive bids used primarily for the purchase of services in excess of \$250,000.00. This solicitation process is used when ChildNet is specifically defining the scope of work for which a contractual service is required and price is the key determinant in making an award.

Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) - A formal competitive procurement solicitation used primarily for the purchase of services in excess of \$250,000.00 when ChildNet does not desire or it is not practical to specifically define in detail the scope of work required. Instead, ChildNet requests that respondents propose a service or program to meet general specifications of the solicitation document. These solicitations are generally issued when: price is not the primary consideration in selection, working relationships are more critical than the price, work to be performed is not well-defined, qualifications and value are factors for selection, negotiations are allowed for any aspect of solicitation, and sealed bids are received. These solicitations are used when negotiation may be necessary in order to achieve the best value. ChildNet evaluates and ranks responsive replies against all evaluation criteria given in the invitation to negotiate and then selects, based on the ranking, one or more vendors with which to negotiate. ChildNet conducts negotiations and awards the contract to the responsible and responsive provider that will provide the best value.

Micro-purchases - The acquisition of services, the aggregate dollar amount of which does not exceed \$3,000. Micro-purchases may be awarded without soliciting competitive quotations and ChildNet considers the price to be reasonable. To the extent possible, micro-purchases are distributed equitably among qualified suppliers.



Minority Business Enterprise - Any small business concern as defined in s. 288.703(6), F.S. which is organized to engage in commercial transactions, which is domiciled in Florida, and which is at least 51-percent-owned by minority persons who are members of an insular group that is of a particular racial, ethnic, or gender makeup or national origin, which has been subjected historically to disparate treatment due to identification in and with that group resulting in an underrepresentation of commercial enterprises under the group's control, and whose management and daily operations are controlled by such persons.

Request for Applications (RFA) - An informal competitive procurement solicitation used for values under \$250,000.00 that provides a general description of the program objectives and specifications and solicits input from providers as to the availability of products and services to meet ChildNet's needs. This solicitation is simplistic in nature and requires advertisement only on ChildNet's website. Applications may be received via fax, e-mail or by mail. Such informal applications are typically requested from local providers.

Request for Proposals (RFP) - A formal competitive procurement solicitation that is used for values \$250,000.00 or over, where sealed proposals are received. Such responses require services to be customized to fit unique circumstances and/or outcome measures. The solicitation includes detailed specifications or scope of work, terms and conditions, and a closing date and time at which time those proposals received will be opened and recorded. Specifications are often complex and the evaluations of proposals consequently take significantly longer than evaluations of normal bids. This solicitation is primarily utilized when cost is not the main consideration, but rather, fulfilling programmatic criteria is of primary concern.

Single Source Purchases- The purchase of services without utilization of a competitive bidding process where it can be reasonably established that availability of service provision is only attainable from one provider and for a justifiable reason.

Small Business - An independently owned and operated business concern that employs 200 or fewer permanent full-time employees and that, together with its affiliates, has a net worth of not more than \$5 million or any firm based in this state which has a Small Business Administration 8(a) certification. As applicable to sole proprietorships, the \$5 million net worth requirement shall include both personal and business investments.

Small Purchases - Small purchase procedures are relatively simple and informal used for securing services that do not cost more than the simplified acquisition threshold small purchases threshold of \$3,501 to \$149,999 as outlined in 2 CFR 200. If small purchase procedures are used, price or rate quotations must be obtained from a minimum of two (2) qualified sources. A cost analysis is not required.

Statement of Procedure:

I. Planning and Assessment

- A.** As part of the agency's strategic planning process, every three years ChildNet reviews its entire subcontracted service delivery system to assess its strengths and weaknesses. Included in this review is an analysis of changes in the funding environment, regulatory environment, and input from service recipients. From this review, goals, objectives and strategies are established to direct allocated resources supporting ChildNet's missions,



values and mandates. ChildNet furthermore identifies appropriate strategies for meeting the identified goals which includes consideration of the network's continued sustainability and possible need to redirect, eliminate, or expand service to respond to changing community demographics and client needs.

B. ChildNet's schedule for the procurement of services is sensitive to the need for continuity of existing services for the children and families who receive them. Each program service category will be considered for new competitive solicitation every three years.

C. Annual Assessment of Community Capacity and Gaps in Services

1. In developing and maintaining services, ChildNet annually reviews the full range of services within the network and the network's capacity to meet its goals and responsibilities. Specifically, information on quality of care, consumer satisfaction, current demographic profile of clients, number and type of service providers, and location and access to services are all collected. Findings may identify the following:

- a. Services that are in short supply needing to be increased.**
- b. Services that need to be created.**
- c. Services that are under-utilized or no longer necessary.**

2. Prior to contracting for new services, ChildNet determines the need for additional services or modifications of the current service delivery system based on a collective review of the above findings and other planning documents. Such documents may include short term annual plans, input from service recipients, and utilization and outcome reports. An annual procurement plan is established that ultimately supports the achievement of the networks long term goals and objectives.

3. ChildNet personnel are encouraged to solicit feedback from community partners and stakeholders as to new or enhanced creative services and programming. However, at any given point in which a particular service is identified as necessary, all communication with potential subcontractors immediately ceases.

4. ChildNet encourages contracts with provider organizations that are responsive to the needs of clients including needs related to geographic location and cultural and linguistic diversity. Additionally, ChildNet recognizes the value of implementation of best practice models and evidence based and evidence-informed practices and may include these principles in procurement documents.

II. Methods of Procurement

A. Micro-purchases. The acquisition of services with an aggregate dollar amount of which does not exceed \$3,000. Micro-purchases may be awarded without soliciting competitive quotations and ChildNet considers the price to be reasonable. To the extent possible, micro-purchases are distributed equitably among qualified suppliers.



B. Non-Competitive Procurement

Given the nature of the industry and the need to swiftly initiate services for clients, purchases may be authorized for the procurement of services without competition. All services procured non-competitively must be authorized in writing by ChildNet's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) prior to the execution of a contract. ChildNet utilizes its Non-Competitive Procurement Form to document authorization and the form is maintained in the contract file. Such purchases will only be made if one of the following situations applies:

1. Emergency contracted purchases are made when necessitated by an immediate danger or imminent need to ensure the safety or well-being of children and families.
2. Exempt Service purchases may be made if the service is determined to be exempt from the competitive solicitation requirements. In acquiring Exempt Services, ChildNet shall consider the ability of the provider, past performance, and their willingness to meet specific programmatic requirements and price. Written authorization of exempt status is maintained in the contract file. The following is a list of exempt services:
 - a. Artistic Services.
 - b. Academic Program Reviews.
 - c. Lectures by Individuals.
 - d. Legal Services, including attorney, paralegal, expert witness, appraisal or mediator services.
 - e. Health Services involving examination, diagnosis, treatment, prevention, medical consultation, or administration.
 - f. Services provided to persons with mental or physical disabilities by not-for-profit corporations which have obtained exemptions under the provisions of s. 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code or when such services are governed by the provisions of Office of Management and Budget Circular A-122.
 - g. Medicaid services delivered to an eligible Medicaid recipient unless the agency is directed otherwise in law.
 - h. Family placement services
 - i. Prevention services related to mental health, including drug abuse prevention programs, child abuse prevention programs, and shelters for runaways, operated by not-for-profit corporations.
 - j. Training and education services provided to injured employees.
 - k. Services or commodities provided by governmental agencies.
 - l. Statewide public service announcement programs provided by a Florida statewide nonprofit corporation under Section 501(c)(6)
3. Single Source purchases are made because of a service or an agency's specialized or unique characteristic which make the service obtainable from only one source. When purchasing services available from a single source, a description of the services sought will be electronically posted on ChildNet's website for at least seven (7) business days. The posted description includes a request that the prospective respondents provide information regarding their ability to supply the services described. Upon receipt of proposals, ChildNet's CEO makes a determination in writing that the service is only available from a single source and the intent to enter



into a single source purchase contract. Examples of circumstances which may necessitate a single source purchase may include, but not are not limited to the following:

- a. The item or service is available from only one source within a geographic area.
- b. The public exigency or emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation
- c. The item or service is protected by patents or copyright.
- d. A court or federal entity or funder has authorized the use of noncompetitive proposals.
- e. After a competitive solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined to be inadequate.
- f. The item or service requires a supplier with unique skills or experience.

C. Competitive Procurement

Any purchase not covered under the non-competitive procurement guidelines will be competitively procured. Purchases anticipated to be \$250,000.00 or less may be entered under an informal procurement process. Purchases greater than \$250,000.00 will be procured using one of the formal solicitation processes. When determined by ChildNet's CEO that a competitive procurement process is required or desired, ChildNet utilizes methods of procurement including the Small Purchases procedures, Request for Applications (RFA), Request for Proposals (RFP), Invitation to Negotiate (ITN), and Invitations to Bid (ITB) solicitation processes.

Competitive Procurements are conducted in a manner that provides full and open competition and eliminates unfair competitive advantages. ChildNet staff involved in the development or drafting of specifications, requirements and statement of work are excluded from competing for such procurements. Situations considered restrictive of full and open competition may include but not be limited to:

- o Placing unreasonable requirements on firms in order for them to qualify to do business;
- o Requiring unnecessary experience and excessive bonding;
- o Noncompetitive pricing practices between firms or between affiliated companies;
- o Noncompetitive contracts to consultants that are on retainer contracts;
- o Organizational conflicts of interest;
- o Specifying only a "brand name" product to be offered and describing the performance or other relevant requirements of the procurement; and
- o Any arbitrary action in the procurement process.

1. Informal Competitive Procurement

ChildNet's utilizes two (2) informal methods of competitive procurement Small Purchase procedure and Request for Application (RFA).

- a. **Small Purchase** procedures are relatively simple and informally used for securing services that do not cost more than \$150,000.00, the Simplified Acquisition Threshold outlined in 2 CFR 200 for small purchases. If small purchase procedures



are used, price or rate quotations must be obtained from a minimum of two (2) qualified sources. A cost analysis is not required.

Request for Applications may only be used for purchases that are for purchases less than \$250,000.00. This solicitation process is utilized when ChildNet seeks to procure a service that qualifies for exempt status but ChildNet nonetheless desires to procure it through a simplified, competitive process. Cost and service effectiveness are the main considerations in the selection process. Selection decisions made through this procurement process are not subject to appeal.

2. Formal Competitive Procurement

a. Formal types of procurement include:

- (i) Invitation to Bid (ITB)**
- (ii) Invitation to Negotiate (ITN)**
- (iii) Request for Proposal (RFP)**

b. Formal competitive procurement solicitation documents minimally contain the following information:

- (i) ChildNet avoids procuring unnecessary items and where appropriate, an analysis is made of least and purchase alternatives to determine which would be the most economical and practical procurement.**
- (ii) A general description of the nature of the services being sought.**
- (iii) The date, time and location of the first official posting.**
- (iv) The date and time for the beginning and the ending of the response period, and a statement that responses must be in writing to be considered.**
- (v) A statement encouraging responses from small businesses and organizations, and by minority and women's business enterprises certified as such by the State of Florida.**
- (vi) All mandatory contract award and performance criteria.**
- (vii) Contract award and performance criteria that is desired, but not mandatory.**
- (viii) A statement that any contract or agreement with ChildNet will require respondent's performance to be in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws, regulations, agency rules and procedures, and ChildNet policies and procedures.**
- (ix) A Conflict of Interest Declaration.**
- (x) Anticipated record keeping and reporting requirements.**
- (xi) Anticipated outcome measures.**
- (xii) The amount of anticipated funding if known, and a statement that actual payment will be contingent on ChildNet's receipt of funding.**
- (xiii) A statement that the evaluation process will include consideration of the price, total cost for each year of the contract, including renewal years, as submitted by the respondents.**
- (xiv) Anticipated contract renewal timeframes and renewal price for each year for which the contract may be renewed.**
- (xv) The Procurement Manager's name, ChildNet's mailing address, phone number and e-mail address.**

- (xvi) A statement that all inquiries and protests regarding the competitive procurement announcement or solicitation document must be made in writing to the Procurement Manager and received before a specified deadline.
 - (xvii) A statement that contract award will include consideration of the respondent's prior relevant experience.
 - (xviii) A date, time, and location for official posting of the contract award.
- c. Each procurement solicitation minimally includes the following provisions:
- (i) Respondents to this solicitation or persons acting on their behalf may not contact, between the release of the solicitation and the end of the 72-hour period following the agency posting the notice of intended award, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and state holidays, any employee or officer concerning any aspect of this solicitation, except in writing to the Procurement Manager or as provided in the solicitation documents. Violation of this provision may be grounds for rejecting a response.
 - (ii) **Convicted Vendors.** A person or affiliate placed on the convicted vendor list following a conviction for a public entity crime is prohibited from doing any of the following for a period of 36 months from the date of being placed on the convicted vendor list:
 - 1. submitting a bid on a contract to provide any goods or services to a public entity;
 - 2. submitting a bid on a contract with a public entity for the construction or repair of a public building or public work;
 - 3. submitting bids on leases of real property to a public entity;
 - 4. being awarded or performing work as a contractor, supplier, subcontractor, or consultant under a contract with any public entity; and
 - 5. transacting business with any public entity in excess of \$3,500.
 - (iii) **Discriminatory Vendors.** An entity or affiliate placed on the discriminatory vendor list pursuant to section 287.134, F. S. may not:
 - 1. submit a bid on a contract to provide any goods or services to a public entity;
 - 2. submit a bid on a contract with a public entity for the construction or repair of a public building or public work;
 - c. submit bids on leases of real property to a public entity;
 - d. be awarded or perform work as a contractor, supplier, sub-contractor, or consultant under a contract with any public entity; or
 - e. transact business with any public entity.
 - (iv) **Clarifications/Revisions.** Prior to contract award, ChildNet reserves the right to seek clarifications or request any information deemed necessary for proper evaluation of submissions from all respondents deemed eligible for Contract award. Failure to provide requested information may result in rejection of the response.



- (v) **Minor Irregularities/Right to Reject.** ChildNet reserves the right to accept or reject any and all bids, or separable portions thereof, and to waive any minor irregularity, technicality, or omission if ChildNet determines that doing so will be in the best interests of ChildNet, the network and its clients. ChildNet may reject any response not submitted in the manner specified by the solicitation documents.
- (vi) **Contracts will be awarded to the responsible and responsive respondent** whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to ChildNet and its clients, taking into consideration the price and other criteria set forth in the solicitation.
- d. **If ChildNet determines that it is advisable to change any substantial element of the advertising or competitive procurement solicitation document after posting, ChildNet will communicate the change to all parties who have already responded, and make all changes available on ChildNet's website.**
- e. **General steps in the procurement process will include, but are not limited to:**
 - (i) **Development of an Advertisement.** All solicitations for contractual services are advertised on ChildNet's website and are also posted in the Public Notice section of local newspapers. Advertisement may also include notifying providers of the existence of a posting by use of other methods or other venues advertising business opportunities. Additionally, ChildNet maintains an electronic procurement notification distribution list that is utilized to notify individuals and organizations of all procurement opportunities.
 - (ii) **Development of a Procurement Timetable.** This minimally includes a solicitation release date, solicitation conference date if applicable, proposal submission deadline date, review dates for rating team, date for announcement of award, projected contract start date and renewal timeframes.
 - (iii) **Development of a rating tool and scoring guidelines.**
 - (iv) **A solicitation conference may be held to consider questions from potential applicants so that areas of ambiguity may be clarified. All applicant questions and ChildNet responses are posted electronically on ChildNet's website for public access.**
 - (v) **Selection of the rating team members (where applicable).** Rating teams may be comprised of ChildNet Board members and ChildNet staff with the most relevant related skills associated with project. The rating team minimally consists of three (3) reviewers.
 - (vi) **All potential reviewers complete and sign ChildNet's Conflict of Interest Questionnaire Form. Additionally, all ChildNet personnel holding the position of a Director level or higher, regardless of participation in the review panel, also complete and sign such form. No employee, officer, or agent of ChildNet shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract if there is a real or apparent conflict of interest. Such a conflict would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible**



personal benefit from an agency considered for a contract. ChildNet's officers, employees, and agents shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from subcontractors, or parties to subcontracts except for where the financial interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value as outlined in ChildNet's "Conflict of Interest" Policy and Procedure, CN 011.005.

- a. If a conflict of interest exists with any potential reviewer, that person is prohibited from participating in the review panel and another reviewer is selected.
- b. If a conflict of interest exists with any person holding a Director level position or higher, that employee and any other employee under such person is prohibited from participating in any part of the procurement process including the review, evaluation, or scoring of proposals and the subsequent negotiation of the contract document.
- c. If at any time it becomes uncertain as to whether or not a conflict of interest exists, such situation shall be described in writing to ChildNet's Chief Legal Officer for a determination pursuant to ChildNet's "Conflict of Interest" Policy and Procedure, CN 011.005.

(vii) ChildNet maintains records sufficient to document the rationale for the procurement that includes:

1. Method of procurement;
2. Selection of contract type
3. Provider selection or rejection; and
4. Basis for contract price.

(viii) All rating team members evaluate and score proposals that ChildNet considers for contract award.

(ix) Recommendations are made based upon the scores from the rating team and consideration of all other relevant factors outlined in the procurement document. Recommendations for contract awards shall be made by the Deputy Chief Financial Officer and the Deputy Chief Financial Officer and presented to the CEO.

III. Selection of Service Providers

A. Providers are selected for their capability to meet the needs of ChildNet and its clients in the most economical and efficient manner possible. Contract awards from competitive solicitations are made to the service provider whose proposal is determined by ChildNet's CEO to be the most advantageous to ChildNet and its clients. The CEO will document his decision in writing and at a minimum the following is taken into consideration during the decision process:

1. Adequate financial resources to operate the contracted program or the ability to obtain them.



2. Ability to meet the specifications or conditions of the program at a reasonable cost.
 3. Ability to meet performance goals.
 4. A satisfactory record of past performance, including demonstrated quality.
 5. A satisfactory record of business ethics and fiscal accountability.
 6. The necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls, and the technical skills to perform the required work.
 7. Consideration of the total cost for each year of the contract including renewal years, as submitted by the provider.
- B. Posting of all awards is done on ChildNet's website according to the timetable established in the solicitation document. Notice of Awards are posted for a minimum of 72 hours (Excluding Saturday, Sunday, State Holidays).
- C. Contracted providers must comply with the various state and federal laws, Florida administrative rules and performance measures noted in the contract agreements. Additionally, all contracts, including small purchases, awarded by ChildNet, shall contain the following provisions as applicable.
1. **Equal Employment Opportunity** - All contracts, when funded in whole or part by monies derived from the Federal government (either directly or indirectly), shall contain a provision requiring compliance with E.O. 11246, "Equal Employment Opportunity," as amended by E.O. 11375, "Amending Executive Order 11246 Relating to Equal Employment Opportunity," and as supplemented by regulations at 41 CFR part 60, "Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, Equal Employment Opportunity, Department of Labor."
 2. **Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.) and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.)**, as amended - Contracts and subgrants of amounts in excess of \$100,000, when funded in whole or part by monies derived from the Federal government (either directly or indirectly), shall contain a provision that requires the recipient to agree to comply with all applicable standards, orders or regulations issued pursuant to the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.) and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act as amended (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.). Violations shall be reported to the Federal awarding agency and the Regional Office of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
 3. **Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352)** - Contracts for an amount above \$100,000, when funded in whole or part by monies derived from the Federal government (either directly or indirectly), shall include a certification by the contracting parties that they have not and will not use Federal appropriated funds to pay any person or organization for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with obtaining any Federal contract, grant or any other award covered by 31 U.S.C. 1352. and to further require disclosure



of any lobbying with non-Federal funds that takes place in connection with obtaining any Federal award.

4. **Debarment and Suspension** - If this Subcontract contains \$25,000 or more of federal funds, provider shall comply with Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, signed February 18, 1986 and published in the May 29, 1987 Federal Register (52 Fed. Reg., pages 20360 - 20369).
- D. Providers will be screened to ensure they have, at a minimum: current insurance, licensure, tax identification, and any other document or qualification that ChildNet deems necessary to provide the requested service, before ChildNet issues a contract or agreement. This shall be done through ChildNet's credentialing and application process as referenced in section IV. A.
- E. ChildNet utilizes the following language and processes providing recourse to any bidders who desire to protest an award:
 1. The following language is included in all formal competitive procurement solicitations:
 - a. All bidders have the right to protest the award. Parties wishing to protest a contract award shall file a notice of protest in writing to ChildNet's Procurement Manager within 72 hours after the award is posted on ChildNet's website. The formal written protest shall be filed within 10 days calendar days after the date the notice of protest is filed.
 - b. When protesting a decision, the protesting party must post a bond equal to one percent (1%) of the estimated contract amount. The estimated contract amount shall be based upon the contract price submitted by the protestor. If no contract price was submitted, ChildNet shall provide the estimated contract amount to the protestor within 48 hours of the receipt of the protest notice (excluding Saturdays, Sunday and State Holidays). Failure to file the proper bond at the time of filing the formal written protest will result in a rejection of the protest. In lieu of a bond, ChildNet will accept a cashier's check, official bank check, or money order in the amount of the bond.
 - c. Upon receipt of the formal written protest and 1% bond, all negotiations with the selected service provider (s) ceases until the protest is resolved.
 2. The Procurement Manager will provide the protest information to ChildNet's CEO to be reviewed with ChildNet's Senior Management committee. This committee will investigate the complaint and issue a written finding and resolution to the protesting party. This protest procedure provides recourse to bidders who believe that their proposal did not receive proper consideration. Bidders entering a protest should be prepared to document specific factors, which put the aggrieved bidder at a competitive disadvantage, and/or document violations of specific sections of state or federal regulations and the procedures set forth in the respective competitive procurement solicitation document. ChildNet reserves the right to refuse to consider an appeal that does not identify specific procedural shortcomings.



IV. Subcontracting and Credentialing Process

- A. ChildNet requires any individual or organization wishing to hold formal network status with ChildNet to undergo an application and credentialing process. The written application requests program information from organizations to ensure that continuity of care can be established. The application also requires independent practitioners to submit information to assess and confirm their appropriate qualifications. The basic steps of the credentialing process are as follows:**
- 1. The individual or organization completes and submits ChildNet's Network Provider Application Forms, documenting where applicable their service or program description, their service experience, licensure and accreditation; education and training, professional references, pending litigation or professional liability actions, and liability insurance coverage. An Affidavit of Service Provider Standards form must also be submitted by the individual or organization enabling ChildNet to determine whether or not approval must be granted by the Department of Children and Families prior to any subcontracting with such individual or organization.**
 - 2. All individuals and/or organizations must also complete a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form. The Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form is reviewed and evaluated as part of the above evaluation process in order to become a Network Provider. All Network Providers must ensure that business conducted on behalf of ChildNet be done in a manner which is impartial and always maintains the best interest of the children and families served. Network Providers are required to have a process for employees to disclose any and all relationships that exists with services being managed or provided through ChildNet.**
 - 3. ChildNet's Contract Management staff review the Network Provider Application Form for completeness and verify documentation (i.e., copy of current license(s) and accreditation(s), copy of proof of insurance, reference checks). This review and verification process includes gathering public information to confirm the submitted documentation as well as reviewing any external monitoring reports from other funding entities.**
 - 4. In the event that the provider is located outside of ChildNet's geographic area, the service is unique or specialized, there are limited service providers available or if the service is court ordered and will be used on a limited basis, an exception to the above credentialing process can be made on a case-by-case basis. However, the provider will be required to submit proof of licensure and liability insurance and approved by the Director of Service Coordination prior to providing services. Services provided by organizations holding contracts or formal agreements with other funding agencies such as but not limited to State of Florida and County agencies, Community-based Care lead agencies, Managing Entities or accredited organizations shall be exempt from the credentialing process. However, each agency shall be required to provide proof of current contract and/or accreditation with the respective accrediting body (i.e. Council on Accreditation, The Joint Commission, and Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities).**



5. The Deputy Chief Financial Officer or designee approves and signs all Network Providers application forms allowing the individual or organization to hold formal network status. If an application is denied, the reason for the denial is documented on the form and sent by certified mail to the applicant notifying them of the denial.
 6. A Network Provider file is kept which contains the approved or denied application form and all application documents and relevant licenses.
 7. All applicants have the right to appeal the denial of an application to hold formal network status with ChildNet. Individuals or organizations wishing to appeal such denial shall file a notice of appeal in writing to ChildNet's CEO within 72 hours after receiving the certified letter notifying them of the denial. The Deputy Chief Financial Officer or designee will provide the appeal information to ChildNet's CEO for review with ChildNet's Senior Management committee. This committee will review the appeal information and reason for the denial and issue a written finding and resolution to the appealing individual or organization. ChildNet reserves the right to deny an appeal that does not identify or document violations of specific sections of state or federal regulations.
 8. In order to be re-credentialed as a formal network provider, providers are required as part of the contract renewal process to submit verification of any pertinent changes in the information attested to on the Network Provider Application Form or in the executed contract document. The assigned Contract Manager informs the Deputy Chief Financial Officer or designee of any problems with re-credentialing. In making a determination about re-credentialing, Contract Management staff may consider utilization information, reviews of site visits, reviews of client complaints/grievances, satisfaction data, and review of all quality assurance and improvement reports.
- B. ChildNet conducts a cost analysis to ensure costs associated with a service provision are allowable, reasonable, necessary, and allocable. The cost analysis is the review and evaluation of each element of cost and at minimum, involves reviewing quotations or pricing structures from other similar service providers or sources to determine their reasonableness. ChildNet staff document an assessment of the appropriateness, necessity and allocation of the costs.
- C. A detailed cost analysis is required for any purchase greater than \$100,000.00 annually, although it may be conducted for purchases of a lesser dollar amount if decided upon by the CEO or designee. A detailed cost analysis involves a documented review/analysis of the Provider's budget and each line item (along with narrative detail of the line item) to determine if the costs are allowable, reasonable, necessary, and allocable. Cost analysis may be performed as part of a formal or informal procurement process as well as any time during the provision amendment or renewal of a current contracted service.
- D. ChildNet utilizes a standard core contract with additional Attachments that collectively make up the contract document. Execution of a contract signifies that both ChildNet and the provider agree to abide by the terms of all applicable laws and procedures as well as the terms and conditions outlined in the Master Services Agreement between ChildNet and the Department of Children and Families. Details of ChildNet's contract elements,



guidelines and standards are found in CN Policy 015.004, Contractual Program Standards and Relationships. The process of contract execution includes:

1. ChildNet's contract management staff develop with the provider a contract for the provision of services which will include the scope of services, major program goals, deliverables, method of payment and performance expectations based on outcome measures.
 2. The contract is reviewed by the Deputy Chief Financial Officer or designee. All new and renewal contracts which contain substantive changes as determined by the Deputy Chief Financial Officer or designee are submitted to the Chief Legal Officer for review.
 3. The provider agency signs the contract.
 4. Upon receipt from the provider, the contract is re-submitted to General Counsel or designee for final review.
 5. The contract is presented to ChildNet's CEO for execution.
- E. Every contract is supported by a contract file containing documentation which records and justifies ChildNet's decisions in the procurement of the service. Contract files are maintained in accordance with ChildNet's Policy and Procedure CN 015.003, Contract File Management. All pertinent information relating to the contract is maintained in the contract file regardless of the method of procurement. The files are maintained for a minimum of six years following termination of a contract, or pursuant to applicable law. If an audit has been initiated and audit findings have not been resolved at the end of six years, the records must be retained until resolution of the audit.

President's Signature: _____

Date: 05-09-18