

# SOLE SOURCE FILING JUSTIFICATION

Rev 9/01/2022

<b>TO:</b> Melissa Cox
<b>CONTRACT #</b> 2332-44745
<b>TODAY'S DATE:</b> 9/19/2022
<b>CONTRACT SUB OBJECT CODE:</b> CJ - Training Serv

<b>CONTRACTOR'S LEGAL NAME</b>	<b>TIN/UBI NUMBER</b>
Northwest Resource Associates	TIN: 911117250 UBI:

<b>ADDRESS</b>	701 5th Avenue, Suite 1230, Seattle WA 98104
----------------	--

<b>CONTRACT PURPOSE</b>
-------------------------

The Statewide Foster Care Resource Information Center (SRIC) was created to serve as our state's initial point of entry for individuals interested in becoming a foster or adoptive parent. The SRIC is a contracted service provided by the Northwest Resource Associates. The SRIC includes the following components:

- Maintains the only database system used to track calls, questionnaires, and other inquiries on a local office, regional, and statewide basis.
- Case management system Retention and Support contracted providers use [they do not have access to Famlink]. The Retention and Support Contract requires documentation in the SRIC system of individual support pre and post licensure. Records are maintained in the database.
- Operates the Foster Parent Statewide Toll-Free Recruitment Hotline 1-888-KIDS-414. The Hotline has the capacity to also respond to prospective foster/adoptive parents who are mono-lingual Spanish speakers.

In addition to actual staff fielding calls from prospective caregivers in both English and Spanish, the SRIC provides a database that is not replicated. The SRIC is a tool, used to manage data related to foster parent recruitment and retention. Having access to this data is vital and is needed to evaluate recruitment and retention strategies.

When an individual or family is interested in becoming a foster family an internet search directs them to a landing page on the DCYF website: [www.dcyf.wa.gov/foster-parent-inquiry](http://www.dcyf.wa.gov/foster-parent-inquiry)

The data from this questionnaire is directly linked to the SRIC. The SRIC manages and filters hundreds of incoming inquiries a month. Once a caregiver is licensed and receiving support, those records are captured as well. Retention and Support staff use this database to document their work with caregivers—which is required for monthly reporting. There are thousands of existing caregivers in the SRIC database.

The SRIC is the only database that our team can use to manage prospective foster parent inquiries and determine where they are at in the licensing pipeline. The new Retention and Support Contract includes several required data points, including documentation of individual contacts made to a prospective caregiver. Responding timely to inquiries results in a higher conversion rate from point of inquiry to licensure.



The SRIC serves as a system to track issues or concerns brought forward by caregivers (licensed foster parents, licensed kin, and unlicensed kin).

All of the data collected in the SRIC is summarized in monthly reports, which is used to inform practice across the state. Examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- Inquiry trends in different areas of the state (including demographic information of prospective foster parents) helps identify areas (geographically and demographically) needed for targeted recruitment efforts.
- Identify potential problem areas in which particular caregiver needs are not being met, i.e. court reports not being provided.
- Identify concerns or complaints that are reported consistently across the state that can be used to determine the root cause as in a flawed policy, inadequate training, insufficient resources.

**FUNDING**

<b>FEDERAL FUNDING \$72,900</b> 45% of the total costs of the program will be financed with federal money.	<b>STATE FUNDING \$89,100</b> 55% of the total costs of the program will be financed with state general funds.
<b>CONTRACT TOTAL \$162,000</b>	<b>OTHER FUNDING \$</b>

**CONTRACT DATES**

<b>START DATE: 1/1/2023</b>	<b>END DATE: 12/31/2023</b>
-----------------------------	-----------------------------

**SOLE SOURCE CRITERIA**

What is a sole source contract?

*“Sole source” means a contractor providing goods or services of such a unique nature or sole availability at the location required that the contractor is clearly and justifiably the only practicable source to provide the goods or services. (RCW 39.26.010)*

*Unique qualifications or services are those which are highly specialized or one-of-a-kind. Other factors which may be considered include past performance, cost-effectiveness (learning curve), and/or follow-up nature of the required goods and/or services. Past performance alone does not provide adequate justification however will not be on its own a sufficient justification.*

Why is a sole source justification required?

*The State of Washington, by policy and law, believes competition is the best strategy to obtain the best value for the goods and services it purchases, and to ensure that all interested vendors have a fair and transparent opportunity to sell goods and services to the state.*

*A sole source contract does not benefit from competition. Thus the state, through RCW 39.26.010, has determined it is important to evaluate whether the conditions, costs and risks related to the proposal of a sole source contract truly outweigh for going the benefits of a competitive contract.*



## SPECIFIC PROBLEM OR NEED

### 1. What is the business need or problem that requires this contract?

This work is directly related to our recruitment efforts and licensing new foster parents. DCYF is legislatively mandated to have the following:

*RCW 74.13.325 Foster care and adoptive home recruitment program. Within available resources, the department shall increase the number of adoptive and foster families available to accept children through an intensive recruitment and retention program.*

## PROVIDING COMPELLING ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WILL FACILITATE THE EVALUATION

### 2. Describe the unique features, qualifications, abilities or expertise of the contractor proposed for this sole source contract.

DCYF has contracted with NW Resources to provide this service since 2008. This system was built in partnership with DCYF to meet a very specific need, of which would be difficult to replicate. In addition, onboarding a new vendor to build an interface with our existing case management system would be cost prohibitive, as the value of the current contract is only \$162,000. DCYF does not have additional funding to support a new system interface should a new contractor come onboard.

### 3. What kind of market research did the agency conduct to conclude that alternative sources were inappropriate or unavailable? Provide a narrative description of the agency's due diligence in determining the basis for the sole source contract, including methods used by the agency to conduct a review of available sources such as researching trade publications, industry newsletters and the internet; contacting similar service providers; and reviewing statewide pricing trends and/or agreements. Include a list of businesses contacted (if you state that no other businesses were contacted, explain why not), date of contact, method of contact (telephone, mail, e-mail, other), and documentation demonstrating an explanation of why those businesses could not or would not, under any circumstances, perform the contract; or an explanation of why the agency has determined that no businesses other than the prospective contractor can perform the contract.

To honor the competitive process and ensure compliance with RCW 39.26, DCYF conducted a competitive solicitation (RFP 1534-567) in 2015 for these services and NW Resources was the only bidder.

This is not an "off the shelf" product available to purchase. The SRIC is a service that requires expertise in the area of foster care recruitment and retention. This is a partnership between DCYF and NW Resource Associates. The staff who operate the Hotline must have the knowledge and understanding to help prospective foster parent interested in fostering and adoption navigate the process. In addition, our partners at the SRIC provide insight and guidance on how to promote a smooth customer journey experience. They are often consulted upon and included in staffing's related to the inquiry and onboarding process. This skillset has developed over years and would be difficult to replicate.

**4. What considerations were given to providing opportunities in this contract for small business, including but not limited to unbundling the goods and/or services acquired.**

Northwest Resource Associates is a small non-profit located in the Pacific Northwest. The services provided under this contract are tied together so it would not be feasible to unbundle the services provided.

**5. Provide a detailed and compelling description that includes quantification of the costs and risks mitigated by contracting with this contractor (i.e. learning curve, follow-up nature).**

Based on information obtained from our IT department, onboarding a new vendor to provide these services could cost more than \$500,000. In addition, DCYF does not currently have in-house FTE's to support a new project of this size and scope.

Given limitations with existing IT Resources and funding for this program, procuring for a new vendor would take up to 12 months to procure, onboard a new vendor, build an interface with our case management system and execute a similar model. This would create delays in delivering these services, create additional program costs and force DCYF to be out of compliance with statutory requirements to provide these services.

**6. Is the agency proposing this sole source contract because of special circumstances such as confidential investigations, copyright restrictions, etc.? If so, please describe.**

NOT APPLICABLE

**7. Is the agency proposing this sole source contract because of unavoidable, critical time delays or issues that prevented the agency from completing this acquisition using a competitive process? If so, please describe. For example, if time constraints are applicable, identify when the agency was on notice of the need for the goods and/or service, the entity that imposed the constraints, explain the authority of that entity to impose them, and provide the timelines which work must be accomplished.**

NOT APPLICABLE

**8. Is the agency proposing this sole source contract because of a geographic limitation? If the proposed contractor is the only source available in the geographical area, state the basis for this conclusion and the rationale for limiting the size of the geographical area selected.**

NOT APPLICABLE

**9. What are the consequences of not having this sole source filing approved? Describe in detail the impact to the agency and to services it provides if this sole source filing is not approved.**

This is a unique service that is tied directly to foster care recruitment and retention. A break in service will have significant impacts to our ability to serve prospective foster parents and existing caregivers. The SRIC is also interconnected to the Retention and Support Contract with the Alliance for Child Welfare

Excellence, as it is their case management system. A change in service provider will impact the execution of that contract.

**10. What considerations were given to providing opportunities in this contract for small business, including but not limited to unbundling the goods and/or services acquired.**

DCYF's Caregiver Recruitment and Retention Team intends to procure for a new service during calendar year 2023, if internal approval is granted. This will replace the existing SRIC service with enhanced features to include: inquiry database that can connect with WA CAP Portal, continued operation of the hotline, chat feature available, and management of a recruitment website landing page.

**REASONABLENESS OF COST**

**11. Since competition was not used as the means for procurement, how did the agency conclude that the costs, fees, or rates negotiated are fair and reasonable. Please make comparison with comparable contracts, use the results of a market survey, or employ other appropriate means calculated to make such a determination.**

This has been the agreed upon contract cost since 2016.

NW Resources Associates has managed this service without any additional funding costs added to the contract, which includes several FTE's. It will be difficult to find a new service provider who can do it for the allotted budget.

