

5. SECTION B - SCOPE OF SERVICES:

5.1. Background

Montgomery County's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Early Childhood Services (ECS) has a strong tradition of supporting high quality early care, education, and parent support services to promote quality early childhood education through child care providers. The County is committed to ensuring that an adequate supply of early childhood education programs is available to meet the demand from families within the community at an affordable cost. As part of the Montgomery County Early Care and Education Initiative (ECEI) 2024-2027 Action Plan ([https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/FY24-FY27%20ECEI%20Action%20Plan%20\(1\)\(1\).pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/FY24-FY27%20ECEI%20Action%20Plan%20(1)(1).pdf)), County leaders and stakeholders are pursuing innovative projects to ensure child care providers can attain long-term business sustainability. One such project is to create a Shared Services Alliance, in which groups of licensed childcare programs (defined as Family Child Care, Large Family Child Care, Centers, and Letters of Compliance) come together through a central hub to form a network and pay dues to achieve economies of scale in purchasing goods and services. A Shared Service Alliance would provide a system that licensed child care programs can use to lower costs associated with supply procurement, technology support, accounting, training and technical assistance, human resources, and billing support.

The Shared Services Alliance concept has been utilized throughout the country to ensure licensed childcare providers are able to obtain resources that allows for their businesses to operate more proficiently and in return, provide higher quality care. Such successful examples are seen in Richmond, Virginia, San Francisco, California, Chattanooga, Tennessee, Washington, DC, and more. These services give providers additional administrative support allowing them to focus more on the education and care of children. Effective Shared Service Alliances can improve the participants' long term financial strength, business operations, and their ability to provide high-quality childcare.

As part of the Early Care and Education Initiative Action Plan, the County intends to solicit requests for proposals from the community to partner with a vendor that will administer the Shared Services Alliance.

5.2. Intent

One (1) contract will be awarded with an estimated amount of \$300,000 to one (1) vendor for an initial term of one (1) year with an option to renew the contract for two (2) one-year periods for a total contract term of three (3) years, contingent upon the availability of county funding. Subcontractors will not be permitted for this project.

In the event the County receives additional funding for services requested under this solicitation, the County reserves the right to expand the existing scope of services for the resultant contract. Such additional services are not guaranteed and will only be requested if funds for additional services are appropriated and encumbered by the County. Additional services may be added via a contract amendment to the contract resulting from this solicitation.

5.3. Scope of Services/Specifications/Work Statement

The Contractor must:

- 5.3.1 Utilize the 2024 study, included in this RFP as Attachment F, conducted by Montgomery County to develop a Shared Service Alliance in alignment with the licensed childcare community stated needs.
- 5.3.2 Develop eligibility criteria for licensed childcare program participation based on the recommendations found in the 2024 Shared Services Alliance study, which is attached as Attachment F to this RFP.

- 5.3.3 Create membership fee schedule for licensed childcare program participation based on Attachment F. Fee schedule should include, but is not limited to:
 - 5.3.3.1 Create a two-tier membership approach to be approved by the County before implementation:
 - 5.3.3.1.1 Tier 1: Basic Access will include, but not limited to:
 - 5.3.3.1.1.1 Access to bulk purchasing of essential supplies and goods at discounted rates.
 - 5.3.3.1.1.2 Participation in limited selection of technical assistance.
 - 5.3.3.1.1.3 Use of basic administrative resources.
 - 5.3.3.1.1.4 Basic inclusion of marketing services.
 - 5.3.3.1.2 Tier 2: Enhanced Access:
 - 5.3.3.1.2.1 All benefits of Tier 1.
 - 5.3.3.1.2.2 Access to additional and premium supplies and goods at further discounted rates.
 - 5.3.3.1.2.3 Participation in expanded selection of training and technical assistance.
 - 5.3.3.1.2.4 Use of advanced shared administrative and operational resources.
 - 5.3.3.1.2.5 Priority inclusion and enhanced presence of marketing services.
 - 5.3.3.2 Transparency in how fees are set and utilized; verbally and in writing.
 - 5.3.3.3 Clear language to all participating Share Services Alliance childcare programs on annual membership fees and conditions of access to services and goods.
 - 5.3.3.4 Clear determination of membership fee payment schedule, payment methods, cancelation, renewal, late payment, and penalties.
 - 5.3.3.5 Manage memberships as well as track utilization and trends in services.
- 5.3.4 Identify partners and vendors for goods and services that can be accessed at a discounted group rate. Goods and services include but are not limited to:
 - 5.3.4.1 Financial Services
 - 5.3.4.1.1 Bookkeeping and records management systems
 - 5.3.4.1.2 Budget planning
 - 5.3.4.1.3 Financial software with revenues and expenditures
 - 5.3.4.1.4 Preparing financial reports – monthly and annual
 - 5.3.4.1.5 Cash flow management
 - 5.3.4.1.6 Collections
 - 5.3.4.1.7 Payroll Services
 - 5.3.4.1.8 Year-end financials to include W2s and 1099s
 - 5.3.4.1.9 Tax support
 - 5.3.4.1.10 Audit support
 - 5.3.4.2 Business Support
 - 5.3.4.2.1 Marketing for enrollment
 - 5.3.4.2.2 Legal advisement
 - 5.3.4.2.3 Operations Management/Resource Allocation
 - 5.3.4.3 Human Resources Support
 - 5.3.4.3.1 Staffing
 - 5.3.4.3.2 Recruitment
 - 5.3.4.3.3 Background checks
 - 5.3.4.3.4 Employee orientation
 - 5.3.4.3.5 Development of business practices
 - 5.3.4.3.6 Employee benefits
 - 5.3.4.3.7 Timekeeping
 - 5.3.4.4 Facilities Management
 - 5.3.4.4.1 Janitorial
 - 5.3.4.4.2 Building maintenance
 - 5.3.4.5 Bulk Purchasing

- 5.3.4.5.1 Meal supplies
- 5.3.4.5.2 Consumable items (i.e. paper towels, cleaning supplies, etc.)
- 5.3.4.5.3 Educational materials
- 5.3.4.5.4 Non-Capital equipment
- 5.3.5 Implement marketing strategies to highlight the benefits and services of the Shared Service Alliance to potential members, stakeholders, and the diverse community of Montgomery County
 - 5.3.5.1 Develop a strategy to recruit a minimum of 20% of licensed child care programs to participate in Share Service Alliance.
 - 5.3.5.2 Marketing efforts will include digital marketing (social media, emails campaigns, website), print marketing (brochures, flyers, posters, kiosks) and participation in community events.
 - 5.3.5.3 Marketing efforts should target type of provider with audience-specific content to explain how the Shared Services Alliance can benefit its members.
 - 5.3.5.4 Facilitate collaborative marketing initiatives among members, encouraging joint promotions, co-branded events, and shared advertising opportunities.
 - 5.3.5.5 Include the official County's seal prominently displayed in all related materials, documents, and publications associated with the contract resulting from this solicitation (the Contract).
 - 5.3.5.6 Include the following statement in all related materials, documents, and publications: "Funding provided through the Montgomery County Government as part of the Early Care and Education Initiative." Statement must be clearly legible and placed in a prominent position, ensuring visibility and readability.
 - 5.3.5.7 All materials must be reviewed and approved by the contract monitor to ensure compliance before finalization and distribution.
- 5.3.6 Ensure comprehensive language access for all child care programs served under the Contract. This provision includes, but is not limited to:
 - 5.3.6.1 Employing bilingual staff proficient in languages commonly spoken by the served communities.
 - 5.3.6.2 Providing access to live interpretation services for non-English proficient individuals during all relevant interactions and events.
 - 5.3.6.3 Translating essential materials, documents, and communications into languages spoken by the served community.
 - 5.3.6.4 Utilizing language line services to facilitate effective communication between individuals with limited English proficiency.
- 5.3.7 Preference is to maintain a physical location within Montgomery County, Maryland for the duration of the Contract. Virtual locations will be considered based on submitted proposal.
 - 5.3.7.1 This location must be accessible to clients during traditional (Weekdays 8:00am – 6:00pm) and non-traditional hours (Weekday Evenings – 6:00pm-8:00pm and/or Weekend hours 9:00am-12:00pm) for in-person services and consultation.
 - 5.3.7.2 This location must be accessible to individuals with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.
 - 5.3.7.3 The Contractor must ensure that the location is adequately staffed and equipped to handle client services effectively.
 - 5.3.7.4 The facility must have appropriate facilities for confidential consultations.
 - 5.3.7.5 Any changes to the physical location during the term of the contract must be communicated to the contract monitor 90 days in advance of actual move.
- 5.3.8 Participate in ECE stakeholder meetings, and work with County contract monitor.
- 5.3.9 Continually research licensed child care landscape and other shared services programs to add additional services/goods based on need and cost savings.
- 5.3.10 Shared Services Alliance must be accessible through a dedicated webpage with secured portal access for members.

- 5.3.10.1 The webpage must be user friendly, regularly updated with relevant information that allows for easy navigation and access to necessary information, membership, resources, and services.
- 5.3.10.2 Access to the secured portal must be protected with industry standard security measures.
- 5.3.10.3 The secured portal must be accessible 24/7, with minimal downtime for maintenance.
- 5.3.10.4 Must provide ongoing technical support to members through a helpdesk or support contact.
- 5.3.10.5 Must provide training resources and documentation to help members effectively use the portal.
- 5.3.11 Evaluate member satisfaction through quarterly surveys and solicit testimonials for feedback.
 - 5.3.11.1 Satisfaction with member support
 - 5.3.11.2 Satisfaction with goods and services offered
 - 5.3.11.3 Satisfaction with website and support
 - 5.3.11.4 Establish criteria for resolving complaints
- 5.4. County's Responsibility
 - County will pay invoices in a timely manner.
- 5.5. Reports/Deliverables
 - 5.7.1 Submit progress reports on a monthly basis.
 - 5.7.1.1 Overview of activities completed, milestones achieved, issues encountered, and narrative with plans for the next reporting period. To include but not limited to:
 - 5.7.1.1.1 Client Data
 - 5.7.1.1.1.1 Number of members at tier 1 and tier 2
 - 5.7.1.1.1.2 Member demographics
 - 5.7.1.1.1.3 Customer satisfaction
 - 5.7.1.1.1.4 Reasons for joining/not joining/discontinuing membership
 - 5.7.1.1.2 Goods And Services
 - 5.7.1.1.2.1 Total list of vendors
 - 5.7.1.1.2.2 Services utilized
 - 5.7.1.1.2.3 Goods purchased
 - 5.7.1.1.3 Marketing
 - 5.7.1.1.3.1 Summary of marketing activities conducted, including types of campaigns (e.g., social media, email, print), content created, events held, and promotional materials distributed.
 - 5.7.1.1.3.2 Key performance indicators (KPIs) such as reach, engagement, click-through rates, conversion rates, website traffic, social media metrics, and any other relevant metrics.
 - 5.7.1.1.4 Other items as requested by the county.
 - 5.7.1.2 .2Structured template provided by the County.
 - 5.7.2 Submit Financial Reports on a quarterly basis.
 - 5.7.2.1 Detailed breakdown of expenditures, revenue, and budget status with projected versus actual spending.
 - 5.7.3 Submit annual report.
 - 5.7.3.1 All items from section 5.7.1.1 above.
 - 5.7.3.2 Written narrative on challenges and barriers of activities.
 - 5.7.3.3 Report that compares performance against industry benchmarks
- 5.6. Performance Criteria
 - 5.8.1 Serve 20% of licensed child care programs.

- 5.8.2 Track and analyze trends and patterns in new membership sign-ups, service utilization, provider types, and membership retention rates.
- 5.8.3 Ensure a minimum of 20 distinct services and goods are available to members, with at least a 70% utilization rate for each, and collect feedback from 30% of members rating the usefulness of each service or good.
- 5.8.4 Quarterly customer satisfaction surveys with target of 80% or higher satisfaction.
- 5.8.5 Established criteria for resolving complaints, including number of complaints received, response times, and 100% resolution rates.
- 5.8.6 Achieve and document at least 10% cost savings per service or good compared to industry benchmarks.
- 5.8.7 Ensure compliance with data security standards for the webpage and portal by conducting regular security audits and tracking the number of security incidents.
- 5.8.8 Establish and maintain at least five partnerships with community stakeholders and participate in a minimum of three community activities each quarter.
- 5.8.9 Achieve specific marketing targets each quarter, including:
 - 5.8.9.1 10% increase in reach
 - 5.8.9.2 15% boost in engagement
 - 5.8.9.3 10% rise in click-through rates
 - 5.8.9.4 10% enhancement in social media metrics
 - 5.8.9.5 10% growth in website traffic

6 SECTION C - PERFORMANCE PERIOD

6.1 TERM

The effective date of this Contract begins upon signature by the Director, Office of Procurement and ends after a one (1) year period. Contractor must also perform all work in accordance with time periods stated in the Scope of Work. Before this term for performance ends, the Director at his/her sole option may (but is not required to) renew the term. Contractor's satisfactory performance does not guarantee a renewal of the term. The Director may exercise this option to renew this term two (2) time(s) for one (1) year(s) each.

6.2 PRICE ADJUSTMENTS

- 6.2.1 Prices quoted are firm for a period of one (1) year(s) after execution of the contract. Any request for a price adjustment after this one-year period is subject to the following:
 - 6.2.1.1. Approval or rejection by the Director, Office of Procurement or designee
 - 6.2.1.2. Submission in writing to the Director, Office of Procurement and accompanied by supporting documentation justifying the Contractor's request. A request for any price adjustment may not be approved unless the contractor submits to the County sufficient justification to support that the Contractor's request is based on its net increase in costs in delivering the goods/services under the contract.
 - 6.2.1.3. Submission within sixty (60) days prior to contract expiration date, if the contract is being amended.
 - 6.2.1.4. The County will not approve a price adjustment request that exceeds the amount of the annual percentage change of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the twelve-month period immediately prior to the date of the request. The request must be based upon the CPI for all urban consumers issued for the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV Metropolitan area by the United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics for ALL ITEMS.
 - 6.2.1.5. The County will approve only one price adjustment for each contract term, if a price adjustment is approved.