



REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

**PEAPOD PROGRAM LEADERS for
Southern Mono County,
including Crowley Lake and Lee Vining area Peapod Playgroups
A program operated by First 5 Mono County
March 2013**

PEAPOD PROGRAM LEADERS

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I. SCOPE OF SERVICES

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

This Request for Application (RFA) outlines the basic requirements for this project in order to provide interested persons with a common understanding of the scope of professional services required for the project. The First 5 Mono County Children and Families Commission (Commission) will coordinate the professional services required of the Contractor.

B. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Commission is seeking Peapod Program Leaders in communities throughout Mono County to establish, develop, facilitate, and implement Peapod playgroups in accordance with the goals and objectives of the Peapod Program. Program Leaders should have experience in early childhood development, group facilitation skills involving parents and young children, Spanish speaking skills (desired), possession of or the ability to obtain Red Cross CPR, and Standard First Aid, certificates.

Contractor shall perform the services of Peapod Program Leader for the Peapod Program to include the establishment, facilitation, and development of “new parent” playgroups (“playgroups”) and assistive services in a manner that is consistent with the Commission’s Peapod Program. The work includes implementation of the tasks and services included in establishing, developing and providing playgroups and associated support for parents of young children.

The focus of the Peapod Program is on the development of playgroups for new parents countywide to enhance the health and social/emotional development of children ages 0-5, and the mental health and stability of young parents. The program will also provide a safe and secure setting for parents to engage in discussion of mental health issues and issues facing new parents; work to increase the knowledge and confidence of new parents; and provide a forum to encourage new parents to gain stronger ties and connection to their community.

By presenting information about mental health within the same context that information is provided about parenting issues, the program seeks to destigmatize the use of local mental health services. Parent Leaders will seek to foster early recognition of emergent post-partum and other mental disorders and provide a forum for open and frank discussion of mental health issues (destigmatization), where seeking assistance for mental health problems/issues is encouraged and normalized.

The identification of participant parents shall be made by Contractor, with assistance from Commission.

Service Delivery:

Contractor will conduct the following number of playgroups, in the location and in the language specified, unless a lack of need or other circumstances prevents this specific goal from being reached.

Contractor shall:

- Provide weekly, in-community playgroups to families with young children. The playgroups shall be geared toward parents with newborns, however all families with children ages prenatal to six are welcome.
- Conduct, on an annual basis, between two (2) to four (4) playgroups.
- Ensure that each playgroup is run for a minimum of ten (10) sessions. Playgroups may continue beyond that date if Contractor and Commission determine that the group is effectively furthering the goals of the Peapod Program.

Parent support offered, and playgroup curriculum and topic content, shall be targeted toward meeting the goals and objectives of the Peapod Program and shall be determined by Contractor, in consultation with First 5. The types of parent support to be offered, and topics to be covered, during playgroups may include but is not limited to: basic parenting skills and strategies; breastfeeding support; the importance of mental health in raising healthy families, including mental health issues common to young families; and discussion of area resources for assistance.

- Coordinate with Commission to secure adequate space for group meetings.
- Maintain and track Peapod Program playgroup equipment and supplies. Commission reserves the right to cancel a playgroup cycle based upon record of consistently low rates of attendance. Contractor shall not be paid for any playgroup that has been cancelled.

Recruitment/Referral/Outreach

Contractor shall:

- Advertise and recruit families for playgroup participation via written and electronic media, and person-to-person contact, including phone contact. Commission will provide assistance with recruitment, as needed.
- Make every effort to outreach underserved populations within the community, particularly families who are socially isolated.
- Link families to community-based family supports, including mental health services. Educate parents about the availability of mental health services, including the opportunity to receive no-cost services through Mono County Mental Health for parents who lack any third-party payor support.

Work with individuals identified through the playgroups as persons needing mental health services by referring and encouraging them to contact Mono County Mental Health. Any such contact and referral shall be kept confidential from other group members, if communicated to Contractor outside of a group session. It is understood that contact and referral information made during a group session will, by definition, be communicated to all group participants in attendance.

- Collaborate with a variety of private and public agencies to facilitate the goals of this program, including the Mono County Children and Families Commission, Mono County Mental Health, local schools, California Early Start Program, Mono County Public Health, Mono County Department of Social Services, Mammoth Hospital, and the Mono County Superintendent of Schools. Contractor shall establish primary contacts with each of these agencies.

- Coordinate with agency partners to maximize outreach to young children and their families, including distribution of community partners' literature and information at playgroups and community outreach events.

Training and Preparation:

Contractor is expected to have a base knowledge in the following areas, but shall additionally attend the following workshops designed to enhance and tailor that knowledge to the Peapod Program, including, but not limited to:

- Principles of playgroup facilitation and administrative organization of parent/child playgroups.
- Identification of basic mental health issues among new parents, including early recognition of emergent post-partum and other mental disorders.
- Complete online training.
- Minimum twice yearly Peapod Leader Coordination meetings to facilitate communication and planning between Contractor and Commission.

Evaluation:

Contractor shall:

- Collect demographic data on program outreach efforts and the participants served, as specified by the Commission. Provide the Commission with a roster of playgroup participants and the number of referrals served by, and made by, the Peapod Program.
- Evaluate the playgroup participants for mental health and other service referrals, and observe and report on the success of the group setting for distribution of, and information about, family support services including mental health services.
- Gather feedback from group participants after every session and at the close of the playgroup to determine effectiveness of the playgroup and parent support services.
- Submit demographic data monthly, along with Contractor's request for payment.
- Participate in a follow-up assessment/survey to gauge the impact of the Peapod Program.

C. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Applications must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. P.S.T. on March 22, 2013. After this first round of applications, new applications may be taken until Contractor(s) are hired.

1. **Two** copies of the application must be submitted to: *John Fisher, First 5 Mono County Director, PO Box 130, Mammoth Lakes, California, 93546. Please submit applications in an envelope clearly marked: "Application for Peapod Program Leader".*

Applications may also be submitted via email to jfisher@monocoe.org, with "Application for Peapod Program Leader" in the subject line.

2. Questions concerning this RFA should be addressed to:

John Fisher, First 5 Mono County Director, 760/924-7626, PO Box 130, Mammoth Lakes, California, 93546.

II. CRITERIA FOR CONTRACTOR SELECTION

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

Selection of the Contractor will be at the discretion of the Commission and it reserves the right to reject any or all applications. Following the evaluation of the applications, the Commission will select prospective applicants to continue in the selection process and participate in oral interviews. All proposers will be notified whether or not they have been chosen as finalists for interview. Contracts will be awarded based upon the outcome of the interviews.

B. APPLICATION FORMAT

The following criteria will form the basis for selection of a Contractor(s) for this project:

Optional: Cover letter addressed to: John Fisher, First 5 Mono County Director.

1. Experience

Summarize your experience with the following:

- Early childhood development,
- Group facilitation skills involving parents and young children,
- Spanish speaking and writing skills,
- Possession of Red Cross CPR, and Standard First Aid, certificates,
- Description of additional experiences and skills that qualify you to perform these professional services.

2. Professional References

Provide at least two **professional** references, including name and title, address, telephone, and a description of the nature of the work performed.

III. CONTRACT DEVELOPMENT

A. GENERAL

The Contractor's professional fee will be negotiated **after** the Contractor has been selected. The professional fee for services rendered will range from \$18.00 to \$22.00 per hour. In addition, expenses necessary to the performance of contract activities will be reimbursed, including certain professional insurance and training expenses.

B. INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

At the time of execution of the contract, provide satisfactory evidence of the Contractor's coverage for:

1. **Comprehensive General Liability Insurance** minimum combined single limit of \$1,000,000 per occurrence. This coverage may be obtained, at Contractor's expense, through Mono County Risk Management.
2. **Professional Liability Insurance** in the amount of \$1,000,000 each occurrence/\$1,000,000 policy aggregate. The minimum number of years for which the coverage shall remain in force and in effect following the Owner's acceptance and occupancy of the project shall be determined in consultation with the Commission and the County of Mono.