

**TRAVIS COUNTY
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
FOR
BATTERING INTERVENTION &
PREVENTION PROGRAM
SERVICE PROVIDERS**

**ISSUED:
OCTOBER 7, 2019**

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS:
DECEMBER 6, 2019**

October 7, 2019

Dear Battering Intervention and Prevention Programs,

On behalf of the Battering Intervention and Prevention Program (BIPP) Executive Committee, we invite you to submit an application describing your program's qualifications to be considered for inclusion in Travis County's referral list of accredited programs. The BIPP Executive Committee is a committee of the Austin/Travis County Family Violence Task Force that is the local oversight agency for BIPP providers and works in concert with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice – Community Justice Assistance Division (TDCJ-CJAD), the state oversight agency.

The BIPP Executive Committee develops guidelines for the BIPPs that receive referrals from the criminal and civil justice systems in Travis County. The Committee also provides oversight of the vendors to ensure quality service delivery for abusers. Victim safety and offender accountability are the central tenets by which programs are measured. If your program is selected for inclusion in the referral list, your program will become a member of the BIPP Advisory Group. The BIPP Advisory Group is comprised of BIPP Executive Committee members and vendors and meets quarterly to discuss statistics; policies and procedures; share success stories; and problem-solve challenges.

The attached Request for Qualifications (RFQ) does not convey a contractual relationship between Travis County, by and through the BIPP Executive Committee, but is the vehicle by which the BIPP Executive Committee will select qualified, accredited programs to meet the diverse and expanding needs of the community. If your program is successful in this process, you will be included on the referral list from January 1, 2020-December 31, 2022, as long as your program remains in compliance and is accredited by TDCJ-CJAD.

Sincerely,

Dawn D. Tannous
Chair, BIPP Executive Committee
Adult Probation Division Director

Kirsha Haverlah
Chair, Austin/Travis County Family Violence Task Force
Justice Planning Family Violence Director

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SECTION I – GENERAL INFORMATION

A. PURPOSE/PHILOSOPHY

The BIPP Executive Committee, comprised of representatives from Travis County Counseling and Education Services; Capital Area Private Defender Service; Austin Travis County Family Violence Task Force, Travis County Criminal Courts Administration, Travis County Attorney’s Office – Family Violence Unit & Protection Order Unit; Travis County Community Justice Services (TCCJS) - Adult Probation & Pretrial Services; and The SAFE Alliance, seeks applications from qualified agencies/entities (“Applicants”) to provide, as a Battering Intervention and Prevention Program (BIPP) service provider, services that address domestic violence in Austin/Travis County. Such services will include, but are not limited to: (1) helping batterers take responsibility for their acts of violence and abuse; (2) emphasizing skills that promote healthy relationships; (3) teaching skills to control coercive and abusive behavior; and (4) collaborating with other community-based providers.

The Criminal and Civil Courts order offenders and respondents to BIPPs. The BIPP Executive Committee seeks to increase the safety of victims and their children by reducing or eliminating the emotional, physical, and psychological trauma caused by domestic violence. To this end, the BIPP Executive Committee recommends batterers attend accredited BIPPs in its collective effort to assist batterers and their families in moving towards a non-violent, non-coercive family structure, to increase safety within households, and to establish skill sets to prevent future violence.

The BIPP Executive Committee intends to use the results of this process to compile a list of qualified, approved, and accredited programs for use by partnering agencies to refer offenders to the appropriate level of intervention.

B. PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Pursuant to the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure 42.141 §4A, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice-Community Justice Assistance Division (TDCJ-CJAD) is the state oversight agency that is responsible for the accreditation and monitoring of BIPPs in the state of Texas. TDCJ-CJAD collaborates with the Texas Council on Family Violence to establish minimum guidelines for programs. These guidelines reflect current best practice standards. The guidelines may be accessed with the following link:

http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/documents/BIPP_Accreditation_Guidelines.pdf

Current thinking and research indicates that BIPPs integrated as part of a community response to domestic violence help to eliminate intimate partner violence by proceeding on both the community and individual levels.

BIPPs are most effective when they focus on a batterer’s responsibility to recognize and stop his/her physically violent and abusive, coercive or controlling behavior; provide intervention strategies in a manner which promotes partner and child safety; and participate in and promote consistent monitoring of offenders. The member agencies of the BIPP Executive Committee are charged with serving and safeguarding public safety and crime reduction and ensuring that the service delivery model by BIPPs is directed toward the safety, protection and well-being of families that are impacted by domestic

violence. BIPP Executive Committee members may conduct site visits of approved BIPP agencies.

C. SERVICE PERIOD

The time period for inclusion on a referral list will be 36 months, from January 1, 2020 – December 31, 2022.

D. REQUIREMENTS

Eligible applicants for this solicitation are private, for profit, non-profit, nongovernmental organizations, including faith-based and community organizations, and publicly funded organizations, not acting in a governmental capacity, e.g. universities, that provide battering intervention and prevention programming to court ordered offenders and/or volunteer participants.

Applicants must:

- Be an accredited program that consistently adheres to the accreditation guidelines of TDCJ-CJAD

OR

- Become an accredited program with TDCJ-CJAD by June 30, 2020.

AND

- Use a curriculum/a that:
 - Exposes the behavior of concern, prompting responsibility for that behavior, developing alternative skills and avoidance, and restructuring underlying justifications, attitudes, and beliefs. (Gondolf, 2011).
 - Provides opportunities for assessment, engagement, violence prevention skills training and education, accountability, healthy relationships after violence, treatment, and relapse prevention for offenders of domestic violence.
 - Has a cognitive-behavioral component that includes active participation from batterers such as role playing scenarios.

AND

- Offer one or more of the standardized levels of programming listed below. Each level must offer a two (2) hour class per week:
 - Low = 18 weeks²
 - Moderate = 24 weeks
 - Severe = 36 weeks
 - Critical = 52 weeks

² Eighteen weeks is the minimum duration of time for a program to be considered a BIPP per TDCJ-CJAD guidelines for accreditation.

E. FOR PURPOSES OF THIS APPLICATION, THE FOLLOWING PROGRAM ACTIVITIES ARE PROHIBITED:

- Couples counseling;
- Family Activities;
- Mediation;
- Mixed levels of groups, for example, a low level client *may not* attend the same group as a moderate level client, etc.;
- Combined female and male groups; and
- Class size may not exceed 15 clients.³

F. RFQ SCHEDULE

October 7, 2019	Notice of RFQ Publication
November 1, 2019	Orientation Session/Q & A
November 15, 2019	Deadline for RFQ Question submissions
December 6, 2019	Deadline for Receipt of Applications by 12:00 PM

All applications must be received by **12:00 PM CDT on or before December 6, 2019**. Proposals received after **12:00 PM on December 6, 2019** *may not* be considered. Applicants may submit six (6) hard copies (one signed original and 5 copies). Electronic applications shall be sent via email to kirsha.haverlah@traviscountytexas.gov in pdf format. Applications must be received no later than **12:00 PM on December 6, 2019**.

G. ADMINISTRATION

Screening for Eligibility, Conformity, and Completeness

Members of the BIPP Executive Committee will screen proposals for eligibility conforming to the specifications set forth in this RFQ. A preliminary review will be conducted to determine whether the application is eligible for evaluation or subject to disqualification. The following criteria will be considered, where applicable, as part of the preliminary review process:

- a. The application was received by the stated deadline;
- b. The application is signed and authorized by the applicant’s Chief Executive Officer or equivalent;
- c. The application is complete in its entirety, including all required attachments and appendices; and
- d. The application conforms to the specifications set forth in the RFQ.

Failure to meet the criteria outlined above, or the submission of incomplete or non-responsive application constitutes grounds for disqualification of the proposal.

H. ADDITIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

³ BIPPs in the U.S. have become the primary means of intervention in domestic violence cases. While curricula vary widely, the majority of programs profess a gender-based cognitive-behavioral approach implemented in a group format with 8-15 members. (Price & Rosenbaum 2009).

Certification

All applications must include a letter of certification that the information provided in the application is true to the best of his/her knowledge that the applying organization does not discriminate with regard to race, creed, color, gender orientation, age, national origin, or disability in accordance with Section 601 of Title VI provision of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Chief Executive Officer or Executive Director of the applicant's agency must sign the certification.

Acknowledgement

BIPP providers must sign an Acknowledgement Form that recognizes the only benefit to a successful applicant, conveyed by this RFQ, is inclusion in a referral list and the applicant is not promised or guaranteed any other consideration (e.g., payment, guaranteed number of referrals, etc.). All successful applicants must also acknowledge they will attend quarterly BIPP Advisory Committee meetings to submit monthly statistics, client exit surveys and any other information as determined by the BIPP Executive Committee.

Procedures

All successful applicants will be required to adhere to responsibilities of BIPPs outlined in the Travis County BIPP Referral Procedures used by departments to refer/monitor a client's BIPP service. Applicants will be expected to incorporate these guidelines into their service delivery model. If, at any time, the program falls out of compliance with the procedures, applicants will immediately submit, in writing, a Request for Referral Procedure Waiver, which includes the reason for non-compliance and a plan to achieve compliance within thirty days.

SECTION II – APPLICATION CONTENT

Applicants must complete each of the following sections as part of their applications. For each section listed below, please note the corresponding maximum point value that may be assigned during the review process. Applicants must use the following page format requirements:

1. Double-spaced
2. 8.5 x 11 inch paper
3. One inch margins
4. 12 point Times New Roman Font
5. Page numbering

Applicants must submit responses in the order outlined below. Sections A and B should be submitted one time. **Section C MUST be submitted for each level of service.**

A. Organizational Summary/Capacity (20 points) (No more than 2 pages)

1. Legal name of applicant.
2. Name, address, phone number, fax number, and e-mail address of the Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director or designee to be contacted on matters involving the application.
3. Year founded, organization's history, mission, and organizational chart.
4. Total organizational budget.
5. Number of employees – full time and part time. Additionally, please identify the rate or percentage of staff turnover from your previous fiscal year.
6. A list of current and/or pending funding from corporations, foundations, and local/state/federal government sources that support this or related efforts.
7. A copy of the applicant's accreditation certification from TDCJ-CJAD. Indicate whether your accreditation has ever been suspended or revoked. If yes, please explain.
8. List all counties in which the applicant provides BIPP services and length of time providing such services.
9. Identify:
 - a. If the application proposes a new program or an existing program within the four levels of programming proposed.
 - b. How many Travis County offenders your program can serve in each program level (low, moderate, severe & critical) in a one-year period.

B. Policies and Procedures (20 points)

The policies and procedures of the Applicant should at a minimum include and describe the areas of interest enumerated below. Please summarize and reference internal policies and procedures on:

1. ADA Compliance;
2. Confidentiality - as it relates to client communication and victim safety and the relevant rules, regulations and law to justify the policy;
3. Intake Procedures;
4. Complaint Procedures/Processes including how information is provided to participants;
5. Orientation/Pre & Post Test Procedures;

6. Attendance policy (Absences are not permitted-while excused absences may occur, all group work must be completed);
7. Communication with client's referring or supervising agency
 - a. compliance and non-compliance
 - b. BIPP procedures cannot conflict with the supervising agency procedures;
8. Applicant's definition of successful completion/discharge and unsuccessful completion/discharge;
9. Awarding certificates of completion and payment of fees; and
10. Standardized exit surveys which focus on behavioral change rather than rate facilitators.

C. Program Description (60 points) (No more than 6 pages of narrative, resumes of key staff do not count toward the 6 pages)

1. Program Goals and Objectives – 20 points

- The applicant should briefly describe the goals and objectives for each level of programming (if the applicant provides classes for more than one service level).⁴ And identify the curriculum/a that will be used for each level of programming proposed and the justification for selecting the proposed curriculum/a. **Include a detailed example of the structure and components of a group session for each level.**

2. Population Served – 15 points

- Attach a detailed description of the services to be provided to clients, including class locations, Spanish and other languages, special populations served, and schedules.
 - If applicable, describe the need in the community and the plan to provide specialized services to marginalized and/or historically underserved communities (e.g., survivors with disabilities, immigrant populations, the deaf and hard of hearing; older individuals, communities of color who are victims of domestic violence);
- Indicate if the applicant has the capacity by level of service to expand class content, schedules and locations as needed and how those decisions are made.

3. Program Scope – 20 points – State how the applicant will incorporate the following tenets into the proposed service delivery model:

- an understanding of the positive, systemic, social, economic, and cultural changes that are needed to end intimate partner violence;
- the experiences of survivors;
- strategies for creating and implementing culturally appropriate responses;
- describe a post-intervention forum the applicant may organize for a volunteer, peer-to-peer, support group for clients who complete a BIPP to discuss how they are using the skills they learned and any difficulties they are experiencing.

⁴ See Attachment A for a list of key elements of BIPP programming.

- a detailed sliding fee scale and an explanation as to the guidelines for determining a fee schedule for clients. Applicants must include one slot, per class, offered gratis for indigent clients.

4. Key Staff – 5 points

All applicants must identify the key staff personnel, defined as group facilitators and supervisors, who are responsible for implementing the BIPP identified for each level of programming. The roles and responsibilities should be clearly specified.⁵

- A description of the expertise and experience of supervisors and counselors/group facilitators should be included and fully described in this section. List the names and types of all degrees, certification, and licenses of all supervisors and counselors/group facilitators. Résumés or CVs should be attached.
- Provide your annual plan for training staff and community stakeholders, including training on Harassment and Non-Discrimination.

⁵ See Attachment B for a list of qualifications and expertise of programs and counselors the BIPP Executive Committee is seeking.

ATTACHMENT A

KEY ELEMENTS OF BIPP PROGRAMMING⁶

1. programming shall *acknowledge previous trauma* and focus on changes in attitudes and values that support power and control, abuse, violence, and battering;
2. programming shall focus on de-escalation strategies for anger and aggression;
3. programming shall focus on promoting honesty, acceptance or responsibility, and accountability;
4. programming shall focus on identifying triggers to violent behavior and developing alternatives;
5. programming shall focus on positive behavioral reinforcement strategies to enhance strength-based skills and pro-social behavior;
6. group sessions shall include the opportunity for participants to actively participate in discussions (those who do not should be encouraged to do so); practice and *structured role plays* whereby participants demonstrate new skills; and create a culture of peer to peer leadership, encouragement and accountability;
7. curricula should emphasize social learning, communication skills, cognitive restructuring and strength-based behavior change; sessions should also illustrate pro-social alternative responses to risky situations as well as skill practice in small groups;
8. curricula should include a focus on egalitarian relationships, shared responsibility, partnership, respect, trust and honesty; it should also promote batterers taking responsibility to stop the violence and abuse, awareness of the consequences of the behavior, empathy for the victim, any children, and the family;
9. curricula should include non-violence planning, including awareness of offender's triggers and violence patterns, emphasis on specific violence cessation skills, non-violence maintenance planning, and the application of cognitive-behavior skills; and
10. programming shall include an exit interview and a specific discharge plan tailored to the batterer's circumstances and needs.

⁶ See generally Carter, Lucy Salcido. "Doing the Work and Measuring the Progress: A Report on the December 2009 Experts Roundtable." Family Violence Prevention Fund. (2009); 2009. Community Corrections' Response to Domestic Violence: Guidelines for Practice. American Probation and Parole Association, Lexington, KY; and Lehmann and Simmons, 2009. Strengths-Based Batterer Intervention, Springer Publishing, New York.

ATTACHMENT B

LIST OF BIPP PROVIDER QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERTISE

1. Understanding of the causes, correlates, and dynamics of intimate partner violence, coercive control, abuse, domination and oppression;
2. Understanding of the causes, correlates, and dynamics of domestic violence recidivism;
3. Understanding of how male privilege and patriarchy are tools of oppression;
4. Understanding of the laws governing domestic violence, probation conditions, court orders, protective orders and restraining orders;
5. Understanding of the co-occurrence of needs that batterers present with and the ability to screen for these as required;
6. Counseling and group facilitation knowledge, skills, and experience;
7. Group dynamics knowledge, skills, and experience;
8. Individual counseling knowledge, skills, and experience;
9. Knowledge of and experience with cognitive behavioral therapy modalities;
10. Knowledge of and experience with trauma informed intervention;
11. Knowledge of and experience with stages of change theory;
12. Knowledge of and experience with motivational interviewing techniques;
13. Knowledge of and experience with offenders with diverse cultural backgrounds and different learning abilities and styles;
14. Maintaining systematic and timely contact with the referral source
15. Proactively and immediately informing referral source about concerns;
16. BIPP Facilitators should have a Bachelor's Degree in behavior science (such as social work, counseling, and psychology) from an accredited college or university; or equivalent training and experience;
17. BIPP Facilitators should have experience in individual and group counseling and facilitation.
18. BIPP Facilitators shall maintain all certifications and continuing education requirements.

ATTACHMENT C
BIPP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
2018-2019

Kirsha Haverlah

Family Violence Director
Travis County Justice Planning

Dawn D. Tannous

Division Director
TCCJS Adult Probation

Caryl Colburn

Director
Travis County Counseling & Education Services

Kasey Hoke

Senior Planner
Criminal Courts Administration

Mack Martinez

Director, Family Violence Unit
Travis County Attorney's Office

Lauren Cisneros

Chief, Protection Order Unit
Travis County Attorney's Office

Delana Lemley

Unit Manager
TCCJS Adult Probation

Nikhita Ved

Legal Services Manager
SAFE Alliance

Bradley Hargis

Deputy Director
Capital Area Private Defender Service

Sara Perez

Manager
TCCJS Pretrial Services

ATTACHMENT D

BIPP PROVIDER ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Referral Acknowledgement

I _____ (Vendor Representative) on behalf of
_____ (Vendor) acknowledge there is no
consideration conveyed by the BIPP Executive Committee other than inclusion on a
referral list for prospective clients.

Compliance Acknowledgement

I _____ (Vendor Representative) on behalf of
_____ (Vendor) agree to comply with the standard
operating
procedures, especially, data reporting, meeting attendance, non-compliance reporting and
confidentiality.

TDCJ-CJAD Acknowledgement

I _____ (Vendor Representative) on behalf of
_____ (Vendor) acknowledge that TDCJ-
CJAD Guidelines are written and available upon request. I further acknowledge that
program design and/or staff training includes sensitivity to gender, race, ethnicity, culture
and differing physical abilities.

Site Visit/Group Observation Acknowledgement

I _____ (Vendor Representative) on behalf of
_____ (Vendor) acknowledge that members of the
BIPP Executive Committee may conduct site visits and group observations.

Group Facilitator Acknowledgement

I _____ (Vendor Representative) on behalf of
_____ (Vendor) acknowledge that Group
Facilitators, who are currently serving a term of probation or parole, will not provide services to
clients.

Signature of Vendor Representative

Date