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| LOCAL COMMISSIONERS MEMORANDUM |
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Transmittal No: 90 LCM-70

Date: May 17, 1990

Division: Income Maintenance

TO: Local District Commissioners

SUBJECT: Food Stamps: Official Questions and Answers from the Food
Stamp Outreach Pre-Bid Conference

ATTACHMENTS: Official Questions and Answers - available on-line.

For your information, I am enclosing a copy of the Official Questions and Answers from the Food Stamp Outreach Pre-Bid Conference which was held May 7, 1990.

Any agency/organization wishing to submit a proposal in response to the Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Statewide multi-media food stamp outreach campaign must do so on or before close of business (5 p.m.) Thursday May 31, 1990.

Ten copies of the Technical Proposal package must be delivered or mailed to:

Linda S. Muncil, Director
Food Stamp Bureau, 7th Floor
NYS Department of Social Services
40 North Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12243

Five copies of the Cost Proposal package must be delivered or mailed to:

Joan Sullivan, Director
Office of Contract Management, 8th Floor
NYS Department of Social Services
40 North Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12243

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After reviewing all of the submissions, it is anticipated that the successful bidder will be announced June 22, 1990 if funding is available.

Oscar R. Best, Jr.
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Income Maintenance

OFFICIAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
RESULTING FROM THE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
FOR FOOD STAMP
STATEWIDE MEDIA OUTREACH PROPOSALS

Pre-Bid Conference
May 7, 1990

New York State Department of
Social Services
Division of Income Maintenance
Food Stamp Bureau
May 14, 1990

ATTENDEES AT THE PRE-BID CONFERENCE

Representing the New York State Department of Social Services

Cindy Cotrona, Food Stamp Bureau
Kathleen McMahon, Information Processing Specialist II
James Spoor, Office of Contract Management
Eric Petersen, Office of Budget Management
Charlene Swanson, Office of Budget Management
Mikki Ward-Harper, Office of Minority Program Development
Larry Ritter, Office of Minority Program Development
Gloria Lekki-Macri, Division of Legal Affairs
Paul Elisha, Director, Public Information Office
Tricia MacEnroe, Director Nutrition Consortium of NYS

Interested Persons

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Carl Markussen	Monetary Management
Thomas Boyd	ODN Productions
Alex Nunez	NYMO Advertise & Design
Susan Zahram	NYMO Advertise & Design
Carol Clement	Artemisia Inc.
Stephanie Richardson	Welfare Research, Inc.
Betsy VanDeusen	Higginbotham & Assocs.
Susan Higginbotham	Higginbotham & Assocs.
John Rodriguez	AD One
Karen Lare	AfterImage Media Group
Betsy Hamilton	Kelliher Samets
Diane O'Connor	Wolkcas Advertising
Cecilia Chandry	Wolkcas Advertising
Pamela Shelton	Innovative Solutions
Virginia Mallon	The Marketing Group, Inc.
Leonard Bannister	The RPM Network

NUTRITION EDUCATION BIDDERS' CONFERENCE
May 7, 1990

Opening Statement

Although there was a day error (namely May 31, 1990 is a Thursday not a Friday) in the

- o Cost proposal section of the RFP, and
- o Cover letter

The deadline for the submission of all technical and cost proposals in response to the Food Stamp Outreach RFP is May 31, 1990 as specified Appendix B Key Dates and Events.

Questions and Answers

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

- Q.1. Can bills go out more often than monthly? (II Administrative and Contractual Information, II.17 paragraph 16 under "Claiming and Reimbursement of Expenses" p. 13).
- Ans. The Department prefers that vouchers for reimbursement be submitted on a monthly basis.
- Q.2. Are media considered sub-contractors? Are printing houses? Recording studios? (II Administrative and Contractual Information, II.17 paragraph 30 under "Sub-Contracting" p. 15).
- Ans. As stated in the RFP a sub-contractor is any institution, individual or consultant, or organization external to the contractor which has entered into an agreement with the contractor to provide any service outlined in or associated with the contract.
- Q.3. We currently keep no time records (other than days off). Since we would estimate the salaries on a percentage of the worker's time spent on the project, can we use a overall time spent or do we need an in/out time sheet? (One of our employees will devote his/her entire time to this project). (II Administrative and Contractual Information, II.17 paragraph 34 under "Record Keeping" p. 15)
- Ans. In the budget section, Item 14 (Personal Services Costs) requires that annual salary x % of time spent on the project equals total cost for each personnel item. Records need to be retained by the contractor supporting reported costs for auditing purposes.
- Q.4. What is "cure time"? (II Administrative and Contractual Information, II.25 Item 2. p. 18).
- Ans. "Cure time" is defined in the first sentence in item #2 which reads the contract shall be subject to the following termination provisions and the contract may be terminated by the Department, in whole, or, from time to time in part whenever the contractor shall materially default in performance of the contract in accordance with its terms and shall fail to cure such default within a period of thirty days (or such longer period as the Department may allow) after receipt from the Department of a notice specifying the default.
- Q.5. What are "deliverables"? (III Food Stamp Outreach, III.2 last paragraph p. 23).
- Ans. "Deliverables" are not only physical products (i.e. brochures, pamphlets, posters, etc.) but also include the accomplishment of specified activities (for example, giving speeches, talking with people as part of an assessment or evaluation component).

Q.6. How do we find out what the local share of the operating budget is? What agencies do we contact? Do we have to bid for the "local share" also? How do we collect these funds? Are they billed separately? (IV Financial, IV.4 item 13 p. 27).

Ans. Local share is any funding other than that financed by this Department that will be used to fund the project. Examples are:

- o In kind contributions - donation of staff, equipment, building space/rental, printing, etc. by the contracting agency
- o Dollar amount associated with "no charge" slots negotiated with a media buy
- o Dollar amount associated with PSA's
- o Donations from community groups in time and/or services

Local share is not a requirement; however, it may be a consideration in the cost evaluation.

Q.7. Is the oral report done by phone or in person in Albany (V Reporting/Evaluation Requirement 1st paragraph p. 32).

Ans. Monthly reports are done in person in Albany. The selected bidder should also be prepared to meet with the Department as often as needed to accomplish the goals and objectives of the campaign. In addition, there is a required semi-annual and a final report. These reports are required to enable us to meet federal reporting requirements.

Q.8. What is "set-off"? (Appendix #9 "Set-off Rights").

Ans. The State of New York reserves the right to withhold money under this contract for money owed under another State contract. (For example the successful bidder also has a training contract with the Department on which an outstanding advance payment was not recouped. Therefore, money can be withheld under the Outreach contract to satisfy the obligation due under the training contract.

Questions from the Floor

Q.9. What was the contract amount the last time it was issued?

Ans. \$300,000

Q.10. Is this grant dependent upon budget approval this year? Any chance we would not get budget approval?

Ans. Yes, the grant is dependent upon budget approval. The allocation is in the current budget and we have received no information which would lead us to believe that this allocation will be decreased or cut.

Q.11. The last time this program was implemented how much activity was outside New York City either percentage or dollars?

Ans. During the current campaign about 60% of program activity (including media) was targeted outside of NYC. Different activities were also targeted for different areas of the State or selected populations because of the nature of the activity. However, the proposal is meant to inform the low-income population in all counties of NYS (including NYC) about the Food Stamp Program. It is a statewide, multi-media campaign and is not meant to be limited to certain areas or populations. Being statewide, prospective bidders should aim at serving all of NYS through the proposed activities.

Q.12. Is it possible to have the summary of last year's program and the results?

Ans. The 1989-90 Outreach Contract is available by requesting a copy in writing from the Department's Public Information Office. This contract terminates September 30, 1990. At the current time the contractor still has outstanding activities. We will not have the results of the campaign until late fall.

Q.13. Are you able to share any thoughts about recruitment and retention in encouraging people to apply for food stamps? Any language about informing people about food stamps?

Ans. The outreach campaign is in its first year, therefore, we do not have figures on recruitment and retention. We would define "recruitment" as the number of low-income you are able to reach with the food stamp message. "Retention" would be the number who apply and are receiving benefits. The Department does have a statewide, toll-free hotline number which is available for gathering information.

With regard to language informing people about food stamps, it is important to keep the message simple and to remember the diverse cultures of the State.

The purpose of the RFP is to solicit ideas which will be used to zero in on the problem with meaningful solutions.

Q.14. Who potentially are the groups that need to be informed about food stamps? Can you give us statistics regarding the elderly, etc. who are eligible? Any priority groups that we should aim towards?

Ans. Federal statistics suggest that nationwide, less than 50% of all SSI recipients and potentially eligible elderly are in receipt of food stamps. The purpose of the RFP is to reach these populations as well as all low-income of NYS. Potential groups are listed on page 21 of the RFP as well as in the attached reports. We are looking for what you can do to reach the potentially eligible populations.

Q.15. Please explain the selection process.

Ans. Both the technical proposal and the cost proposal are evaluated separately. The technical committee is composed of members with expertise in different area such as media. The cost proposal is analyzed by the Office of Contract Management. Both evaluations are submitted to the Final Selection Committee which makes the decision on the successful bidder. If necessary the Department may request that certain bidders give an oral presentation. These presentations are scheduled from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 40 North Pearl Street, Albany. Not all bidders may be asked to participate. The purpose of the oral presentation is to clarify issues and/or to obtain additional information. The Department will provide 48 to 72 hours advance notice.

Q.16. Define the products that can be purchased with food stamps.

Ans. Food, as defined by Congress in the Food Stamp Act, means any food or food product for home consumption except alcoholic beverages, tobacco, hot foods or hot food products ready for immediate consumption, and any food marketed to be heated in the store. The Food Stamp Act also states that seeds and plants for use in gardens to produce food for the personal consumption of the eligible household are eligible foods. In addition, the Act provides that meals served by meal delivery services and communal dining facilities are eligible for purchase with food coupons. The Food Stamp Program regulations, in defining eligible food, further specify that food or food products shall be for human consumption in order to be eligible for purchase with food coupons.

Q.17. Does anybody know what historically happens with regard to the budget - do they usually cut or not cut?

Ans. Last year the funds appropriated for food stamp outreach remained untouched.

Q.18. How was the \$300,000 decided as the amount? Prior history? Or was there some type of analysis?

Ans. In a time of State fiscal restraints and based on previous campaigns (Food Stamp Nutrition Education statewide, multi-media campaigns), the Department determined that it could accomplish the goals and objectives stated in the RFP for a minimum of \$300,000. Consequently, the decision was based on requesting a funding level that was adequate and yet had potential for approval.

Q.19. Do you think more money will be allocated to the project or basically the maximum of \$300,000?

Ans. Under the present State budget crisis we do not anticipate that this dollar amount will be increased.

Q.20. Can we get copies of the 1978 Outreach Program?

Ans. Copies of evaluations done in 1978 and 1979 are not available. Over the past few years the full reports were requested by the United States Department of Agriculture as well as other states. Consequently, the report available is the Food Stamp Outreach Communications Program - Final Report (September 30, 1976) which is a part of the enclosure.

Q.21. Page 11 of the cost proposal package refers to the organizational status form. Should this form be completed by non-profit organizations only?

Ans. Yes, for-profits need not complete this form.

Q.22. Is there any information regarding barriers to the Food Stamp Program? Does it go along with the population not being served? Is there any way to obtain this information?

Ans. With regard to barriers to participate and populations see the attached reports. The findings in these reports are still valid. Examples of barriers would be language problems either because potential recipients do not comprehend the program or because they do not speak/understand English. Also, those living in rural areas may have transportation problems. They also may have to transact their ATP at a bank or shop at a store where everyone knows them. Their reason for not participating may be pride or the stigma of "welfare". Discovering the barriers to participation and eliminating these barriers is a part of your process in developing a meaningful campaign. Reaching the potentially eligible and encouraging them to apply is the purpose of the RFP.

Q.23. Have you actually found a specific source that has failed that we could use as guideline so as not to commit the same type of mistake?

Ans. We are looking for you to use your resources and expertise to develop a meaningful campaign.

Q.24. Why was the 1978 program discontinued?

Ans. The outreach program was discontinued because the Food Stamp Act was changed eliminating federal matching funds for food stamp outreach. Social services law states that the Department can only conduct food stamp outreach activities if federal matching dollars are available. With the passage of the Hunger Prevention Act of 1988 federal funding once again became available. Consequently, the Department released an RFP in 1989 as a 1989-90 campaign.

During this period, however, the Department conducted food stamp Nutrition Education Campaigns (1984 to 1989) which helped to promote the Food Stamp Program.

Q.25. Is there any problem in getting information by calling different people in the State's local departments of social services?

Ans. No, you may contact the local departments of social services.

Q.26. Regarding the payment process - timeframes for payment, please explain.

Ans. We are awarding the outreach contract in June. This should allow for enough time to obtain a fully executed contract by October 1, 1990 which is the start-up date. Coupled with the 30 day prompt payment requirement, vouchers should be processed timely.

Q.27. Regarding production staff - if these individuals are considered employees by State Unemployment Insurance, then should they be considered employees and therefore entitled to fringes for the purpose of the contract?

Ans. Yes.