

**CONCEPT PAPER FOR NYC DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND CRIME VICTIM HOTLINES,
HUMAN SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY**

I. BACKGROUND

The City of New York has a longstanding and ongoing commitment to supporting survivors of crime and abuse. The Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) has funded operation of the City’s Crime Victim Hotline since 1978 and Domestic Violence Hotline since 1994. The Hotlines have functioned as the gateway to victim services for New Yorkers, responding to 93,235 calls on the Domestic Violence Hotline and 8,202 calls on the Crime Victims Hotline in FY2021¹. The Hotlines provide non-judgmental support, crisis counseling, safety planning, information and linkages to community-based and government resources and services. In addition, the Domestic Violence Hotline is the primary way for survivors to access domestic violence shelters in New York City, accounting for 34,458, or 37% of total DV hotline calls in 2020. Services are available 24/7, 365 days a year with the ability to assist in any language.

Over the past year, MOCJ; the Mayor’s Office to End Domestic and Gender-based Violence (ENDGBV); the Human Resources Administration, Office of Emergency Intervention Services (HRA EIS); and the Mayor’s Office of the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) have met to reimagine the Hotlines to better meet the needs of New Yorkers impacted by crime, violence, and abuse. This concept paper proposes bifurcating the current contract structure to create separate human service and technology contracts which would enable the City to own and access the data separate from the program. The City would benefit from this ability to retrieve data and run reports as needed; such abilities have been identified as a best practice by CTO and colleagues at the national hotline.

II. PROPOSED SERVICE CONTRACT STRUCTURE

A. Dual Providers

The model for the Hotlines will require two vendors, one to provide technology services to support the operation of the Hotlines; and the other to provide human services to engage with and support hotline callers. A vendor may apply for one contract (either human services or technology), both contracts, or apply for both contracts in partnership with another organization (with each vendor assigned to either human services or technology). In order to increase the ability of diverse providers to compete for this program, we are seeking to bifurcate this contract. Such competition will enhance the ability of service providers without technological capacity, or conversely technological companies without human services offerings, to compete in the solicitation process, providing improved options to better meet the needs of the City, victims, and survivors. This approach advances the goals of procurement justice by creating more equitable access to competitive solicitations for smaller providers and grass roots organizations.

1. **Technology Provider:** The technology provider will implement and maintain the underlying omni-channel technology that allows the human services vendor to engage with hotline callers via telephone and chat and/or text. This will include, but is not limited to, software, hardware, software licensing, and cloud access/protected data storage; and related training, technical assistance, maintenance, and software updates/bug-fixes. The technology provider will work with the contracting agency and the human services provider to develop and implement robust data collection processes and procedures.
2. **Human Services Provider:** The Human Services Provider will utilize the

¹ FY21 ran from July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

technology available through the Technology Provider to operate a hotline via telephone and chat and/or text, and provide non-judgmental support, crisis counseling, safety planning, information and linkages to community-based and government resources, and screening and referrals to appropriate shelter(s).

III. GOALS AND SERVICES

A. Human Services Provider

1. Operation of Incoming Hotline Contacts. The Human Services Provider will contemporaneously answer and respond to incoming telephonic calls and online chats and/or text/sms messages received through the Domestic Violence and Crime Victim Hotline for the City of New York. The current Domestic Violence and Crime Victim Hotlines function as two separate hotlines with two distinct phone numbers, but both Hotlines are currently answered by the same staff and generally provide access to the same range of services. This concept paper proposes to consolidate the phone numbers into one hotline, which will be renamed. The Human Services Provider will require skilled and trained staff to answer and respond to incoming hotline calls and online live messages (“chats”) and/or sms text messages, in a timely manner and utilize trauma-informed, culturally-competent and client-centered responses. The Human Services Provider will offer the following services for hotline callers:

(1) crisis counseling (2) risk assessment and safety planning (3) assistance with finding shelter, and (4) information about, referrals and linkages to additional resources informed by individualized safety plans, including a wide range of relevant social service organizations and government agencies. The hotline must operate 7 days a week, 365 days a year, for 24 hours per day and be accessible to callers speaking any language. The telephone number for the Hotline is 800-621-HOPE (4673). Should any outages of the telephone hotline or live chat/text occur, the Human Services Provider must work with the Technology Provider to develop and implement an emergency back-up plan that minimizes any interruption in services.

2. Relationship with Technology Provider. The Human Services Provider will utilize the City-selected Technology Provider’s omni-channel technology, including software and data storage. The Technology Provider will supply and maintain the necessary technology for mutual telephonic and live chat and/or text communication between callers and the hotline Human Service Provider. The Technology Provider will provide and support the use of an omni-channel system for voice and TTY telephone calls; and contemporaneous online messaging (“chats”) and/or sms text. The Technology Provider will also offer initial training and ongoing technical assistance to the Human Services Provider on the use of the omni-channel tool. The Human Services Provider will maintain an ongoing working relationship with the Technology provider and will utilize their provided technology as stipulated by the Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice.

3. Legal and Privacy Limitations. The Human Services Provider will work with the Technology Provider to ensure that any interaction with persons contacting the Hotline or any data collected and/or produced during such contacts be kept confidential. The Human Services and Technology Providers both understand that all data collected or produced from Hotline contacts, including any personal identifiable information (PII) of those who contact the Hotline or created by the software, are the property of the City of New York. The Human Services Provider will use acceptable industry practices for protecting such information and exercise a reasonable standard of care in maintaining the confidentiality of those contacting the hotline. The Human Services Provider must abide by and execute a cloud rider concerning PII and related data. The Human Services Provider must agree to

comply with all local, state, and federal laws concerning the privacy and confidentiality of crime victims, including but not limited to, victims of gender-based crime.

4. Data Reporting. The human services provider will collect client-level data to comply with the City's data reporting requirements. The human services provider will utilize the tools provided by the technology provider in collecting such information.

B. Technology Provider

1. Tools and Technology. As part of being considered as a Technology Provider, the Provider will showcase a demonstration of their working, production ready software in use for the purposes of supporting a Domestic Violence and the Crime Victims Hotline for the City of New York. The Technology Provider will supply telephonic and computer software and other technological supports necessary to reliably manage and respond to the Domestic Violence and Crime Victims Hotline for the City of New York. The Technology Provider will provide supportive hardware to the City as necessary to fulfill requests for tools, or related services, made by MOCJ or the human services provider under the Contract.

2. Training and Technical Assistance. The Technology Provider will produce initial and follow-up trainings, as well as ongoing technical assistance and customer service support, to the Human Services Provider. The Technology Provider will specify how many hours will be required to integrate their platform into the Human Services Provider workflows, and outline any customization requirements they believe will be required in order to meet the needs of the Human Services Provider and the City of New York

3. Legal and Privacy Limitations. The Technology Provider will agree that any interaction with persons contacting the Hotline or the data produced by such contacts will be conducted solely by employees of the Human Services Provider. The Technology Provider understands all data produced by the Hotline, including that of those who contact the Hotline and created by the software, must be kept confidential and are the property of the City of New York. The Technology Provider must execute and abide by a cloud rider concerning PII and related data.

4. New Technologies. During the term of the Contract, if new methods or types of technology or supports become available from the Technology Provider, the City will reserve the right to modify the Contract to account for that equipment or supports to better serve the needs of the City's Crime Victim and Domestic Violence Hotlines. Furthermore, if new methods or types of hotline management equipment or technologies become available in the marketplace from other vendors, the City reserves the right to establish separate contracts for such equipment or technologies with other vendors.

4. Data Reporting. The Technology Provider should outline the performance metrics available in the proposed tool. It should make clear what data they will commit to make available as part of a contract. Data reporting capabilities should be outlined in such a way that clearly describe what metrics are available "out of the box" and specifically which metrics can be accessed programmatically, and/or through a dashboard. Additionally, the Technology Provider must outline details of any allowances, and cost estimates for ad hoc or custom reporting requests.

5. Interoperability and Reporting: The City of New York will provide details of the data structure and API formats needed to enable interoperability/data exchange with the STARS database. The Technology Provider must clarify to what extent their solution can support

this use.

IV. FUNDING

- Minimum funding amount for FY22: \$2,025,000.

We anticipate an increased budget based on market research resulting from the responses to this concept paper.

V. CONTRACT PERIOD

It is anticipated that the first contract term will be for a period of three years starting on July 1, 2023, with the option for two two-year renewals.

VI. BASIS FOR AWARD

Award selections for both the Human Services Provider and the Technology Provider will be based on the best technically rated proposals. Applicants selected for award will be those which demonstrate successful experience providing similar services to similar populations as those targeted by the RFI. Proposals will be evaluated according to criteria that will include successful relevant experience, organizational capacity and proposed approach to the program model.

Submission must include budget detail with line-item budget and narrative

VII. PROCUREMENT TIMELINE

It is anticipated the Request for Proposals (RFP) will be released in Summer 2022 with contracts starting summer 2023.

VIII. USE OF PASSPORT AND REQUIRED SERVICE PRE-QUALIFICATIONS

PASSPort is a web-based system maintained by the City of New York to manage procurement. The Hotline Services RFP will be released exclusively through the PASSPort system. To become eligible to apply for this and all other Human/Client Services RFPs, all organizations must have an account and an Approved HHS Accelerator PQL qualification status in PASSPort. RFP Proposals and Prequalification applications will ONLY be accepted through PASSPort. If you do not have a PASSPort account or an approved PASSPort HHS Accelerator PQL Application, please visit nyc.gov/passport to get started. Log in to PASSPort to view and submit a response for this Concept Paper and the future RFP.

IX. REQUIRED SERVICE PRE-QUALIFICATIONS

The Hotline Services RFP will be released exclusively through the PASSPort system. To become eligible to apply for this and other HHS RFPs, visit <http://www.nyc.gov/passport>.

X. COMMENTS

Please email written comments to MOCJProcurements@cityhall.nyc.gov no later than **January 8, 2022**. Place “Domestic Violence & Crime Victims Hotline” in the subject line. Questions regarding this RFI must be transmitted in writing to the Agency Contact. Please email comments to MOCJProcurements@cityhall.nyc.gov.