



Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice

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CONCEPT PAPER FOR ABUSIVE PARTNER INTERVENTION PROGRAMMING (APIP)

I. OVERVIEW

The New York City Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ) seeks to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to provide abusive partner intervention programming (APIP) for intimate partner violence defendants in the city's criminal courts in each of the five (5) boroughs. The goal of the program is to educate participants about the dynamics and effects of intimate partner violence (IPV) and move participants toward more prosocial and less abusive behaviors, ultimately reducing recidivism among participants. Providers would implement the program across one or more boroughs based on the *Dignity and Respect* and *Turning Points* curricula that the city developed in 2019 for male-identified and female-identified clients, respectively.

Even as strides have been made to improve public safety in New York City, domestic violence continues to be a stubborn problem. In 2021, according to NYPD data disaggregated by the Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender-Based Violence (ENDGBV), there were 113,059 domestic incident reports involving intimate partner violence across all five boroughs - over 300 a day.¹ The number of intimate partner homicides has also remained relatively stable over the five-year period between 2017 and 2021, fluctuating from a low of 24 to a high of 30 according to ENDGBV's 2022 Fatality Review Committee Report.² Recognizing that these patterns of abuse would not change without interventions to hold abusive partners accountable and change patterns of abusive behavior, MOCJ contracted with the Center for Justice Innovation (CJI, formerly known as the Center for Court Innovation or CCI) to develop a new, trauma-informed program for adults who have been harmful in intimate relations that utilizes cognitive behavioral approaches to encourage accountability and promote behavior change.

The results, *Dignity and Respect* and *Turning Points*, are flexible 26-week or 16-week curricula forged from promising practices and evidence-based approaches from around the country. It uses cognitive behavioral strategies to help participants identify harmful thoughts, beliefs, actions, and values with the goal of creating life skills and strategies that promote healthy relationships. The curriculum focuses on four areas of accountability and change: self, intimate partner relationships, family, and community. *Dignity and Respect* and *Turning Points* also look at the impact of trauma on past and current intimate partner violence and use a culturally sensitive approach to engage participants in developing healthy relationships. All the program activities are designed to explore and address one or several of the elements of a cognitive change approach that incorporates the

¹<https://www.nyc.gov/assets/ocdv/downloads/pdf/2021-community-board-snapshots-ipv.pdf>

² <https://www.nyc.gov/assets/ocdv/downloads/pdf/2022-Annual-FRC-Report.pdf>

program's core values of dignity and respect.

In Spring of 2020, MOCJ [launched](#) a three-year [demonstration project](#) to test implementation of *Dignity and Respect* and *Turning Points*. Three contracted providers were identified to implement the curriculum across all five boroughs, and programming launched in FY21. CJI stayed on the project as a technical assistance provider and worked with MOCJ to provide sustained stakeholder education and engagement to ensure optimal program use. This solicitation builds on the demonstration project by establishing an ongoing APIP for IPV defendants across New York City.

II. BACKGROUND

In late 2016, the city convened the [Domestic Violence Task Force \(DVTF\)](#), co-chaired by MOCJ and ENDGBV. The DVTF engaged other city agencies, law enforcement, community-based partners, and advocates over a time-limited period, culminating in a May 2017 report outlining its recommendations for targeted investments to create durable and effective solutions to domestic violence citywide. One recommendation called for the city to require that abusive partner intervention programs (APIPs) funded by city contracts employ evidence- and trauma-informed interventions. MOCJ contracted CJI and partnered with ENDGBV to develop a curriculum that achieved this goal and to shape the services offered by contracted providers.

The DVTF and domestic violence movement nationally have consistently heard concerns from stakeholders that previous models of abusive partner intervention overemphasize outdated tactics, and that a new approach, which incorporates the most up-to-date research and best practices, is needed. To help identify the elements needed for a successful model locally, ENDGBV engaged a consultant to convene a broad range of stakeholders, including survivors and abusive partners, in the Interagency Working Group on NYC's Blueprint for Abusive Partner Intervention (IWG). The IWG's blueprint report on enhancing NYC's APIP services, [Seeding Generations](#), was released in October 2017. To further hone a local program model, members of the DVTF's Criminal Justice Subcommittee, which was made up of representatives from MOCJ, ENDGBV, each district attorney's office, NYPD, defense attorneys, DOP, crime victim service providers, advocates and survivors, conducted an internal survey to identify the most crucial elements of an APIP. Across these various initiatives, it was clear that city partners and experts want APIPs that, among other things: (i) hold abusive partners accountable; (ii) tailor interventions to the needs of clients and communities; (iii) eliminate or reduce program fees; (iv) use trauma-informed practices; and (v) utilize process and outcome evaluations to inform and enhance the program as well as identify and document program impact.

In developing a curriculum and program model that was responsive to local needs, CJI built upon previous work done in the city while also engaging national APIP experts to bring the city-funded model in-line with cutting-edge research. CJI, MOCJ and ENDGBV also continued to invite input from advocates, thought leaders, criminal justice stakeholders and survivors throughout curriculum development. The resulting curricula, *Dignity and Respect* and *Turning Points*, provide a program facilitation plan that is the first of its kind in terms of substance and approach. The curricula are based on two full years of work with survivors, advocates and other stakeholders in New York City to identify what type of programming would best address domestic violence offending behaviors and increase safety and well-being for survivors.

In FY21, MOCJ engaged three contracted providers to launch a demonstration project for its new APIP. Providers received referrals from across all five boroughs and implemented both *Dignity and Respect* as well as *Turning Points*. The programs began amid the COVID-19 crisis. As a result of the pandemic's closing of the Courts, the number of individuals seen by the Court and thus mandated by programming was likely lower than projected. Bail and discovery reforms have similarly affected program referrals. Despite launching during the COVID-19 pandemic, the program met its target

goals, serving 2,615 total participants through the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2023 across all five boroughs and maintaining on average completion rate of 73%, meeting and exceeding the deliverables as stated in the contracts for 70% minimum completion. Importantly, from a preliminary data analysis, the program saw overall positive trends in the number of referred individuals to programming each quarter and increase in HOPE Scores from pre-program to post-program in every borough.

III. PURPOSE OF THE PROPOSED RFP

MOCJ proposes to issue an RFP to procure for qualified vendors to provide APIP for intimate partner violence defendants in the city's criminal courts in each of the five (5) boroughs. Funding will cover enrollment for approximately 850 participants throughout the city annually. Providers will be expected to implement curricula and provide ancillary services to participants as outlined below.

Program Goals

1. Implement programming for intimate partner violence defendants that is consistent across all five (5) boroughs based on the *Dignity and Respect* and *Turning Points* curricula, with the opportunity to propose innovations on the *Turning Points* curricula.
2. Educate participants about the dynamics and effects of intimate partner violence to foster accountability for harmful behavior.
3. Provide participants with tools to change behavior and prevent future abuse.
4. Provide ancillary services for participants to enhance social connections, foster hope and reduce trauma symptoms.
5. Reduce recidivism among participants.

A. Services Provided

To implement the program model, the program provider will provide the services outlined below, either directly or through subcontracted or partnerships with other providers. Providers should ensure adequate program staff available to meet clients' needs, including group facilitators, case managers, court-based staff and any necessary administrative and/or maintenance staff to support operations. Providers will have the facilities necessary to deliver services and programming to clients in the borough(s) the proposed program would serve. Providers will be expected to describe current or identified space(s) and how they would be appropriate for facilitating programming. All services should be language accessible, accessible to those with disabilities, and consistent with the [Human Rights Law](#) as set forth by the [New York City Commission on Human Rights](#).

Intake and Assessment: The program provider will have a process to conduct intakes with all participants referred to the program to identify suitability and understand individual's unique needs. The provider will also assess clients using the [DVRNA](#) tool contemplated by the

curriculum, which separates participants into low-risk, medium-risk and high-risk groups. Based on the assessment, the provider will make a recommendation about whether the client is ready to begin classes or whether there are concerns related to mental health and/or substance misuse that might interfere with their capacity to participate in and benefit from programming at this time.

Group Facilitation: The program provider will have the capacity to facilitate all lessons included in the *Dignity and Respect* and *Turning Points* curricula with fidelity to the model and overall program goals. This includes having classes facilitated by teams of two (2) qualified facilitators with a strong background in facilitation and IPV dynamics, being able to facilitate sessions both remotely and in person, being able to run multiple sessions concurrently and ensuring staff are trained in the curricula and any tools required therein. The provider should also ensure that there is adequate space, administrative support, equipment, and technology to operate the program and facilitate lessons.

Case Management: The program provider will have the ability to offer case management to participants, with dedicated staff conducting trauma-informed, one-on-one check-in sessions with clients to discuss their progress in the program, identify any issues, and make appropriate referrals using a warm handoff. Ancillary services to address employment skills and training, education, housing, substance use treatment, and other needs related to mental or physical health can be offered internally or through referrals to external partner organizations. The provider would be responsible for developing and overseeing a participant's case management plan, as well as for building and maintaining relationships with any external referral partners.

Court Engagement: The program provider will have experience meeting the needs of clients who have been mandated to programming from Supreme or Criminal Courts in New York City. This includes experience using retention and engagement strategies that motivate clients to remain involved in and successfully complete their mandate as well as experience working with judges and other court personnel. The provider will also be responsible for monitoring and providing timely reporting to the court on participant compliance and progress in the program, as well as quickly implementing responses to non-compliance with court mandates.

Staff Training: The program provider will ensure that all program staff have adequate training and professional development to deliver services in accordance with the program model. Initially, all program staff will be trained in the curricula, facilitation, and any related tools and assessments by a trainer to be determined by MOCJ. To facilitate ongoing training for existing staff and onboarding for new staff, the provider will also designate staff who will be trained via a 'Train the Trainer' model on ensuring others have the skills needed to facilitate the curricula.

Security: The program provider will have security measures in place to ensure the safety of clients and staff. If the provider also provides services for survivors of gender-based violence, they will have extensive measures to ensure partners will not interact while entering, at, or exiting the premises.

B. Referral Sources

All referrals to APIP will be court-mandated and come from Supreme or Criminal courts on a borough-specific basis. The program providers will work with court personnel to designate a process for identifying, referring and intaking clients for the APIP in their

borough. Such processes may entail the designation of a full- or part-time court liaison to establish an in-person relationship with relevant court actors.

C. Data Reporting and Security

The program provider will collect client-level data to comply with the city's data reporting requirements and share data in aggregate through regular reporting and using a standard data reporting template at a cadence to be identified by MOCJ. MOCJ anticipates that providers will collect and maintain individual case-level data but report to MOCJ in aggregate on key program indicators such as: number of intakes into the program, family size, demographic information, program engagement, program completion and discharge status. MOCJ will not collect or maintain any individual case level data. The program provider is also responsible for ensuring data security in compliance with guidance from NYC Cyber Command and all local, state and federal laws surrounding personally identifying information (PII) for victims of crime. This includes plans to guard against data breaches and remedy them if they do occur.

D. Liability and Indemnification

The program provider must be well versed in working with court mandated participants, demonstrate cultural competence, and have an understanding of the dynamics and impacts of IPV. The Provider is free to subcontract to fulfill the terms necessary to deliver APIP curricula, in accordance with all local, state, and federal procurement requirements. The Program Provider must indemnify, defend and hold the City harmless in all claims or actions that arise in connection with this program. The Program Provider acknowledges that they are liable for any negligence that occurs by the acts of its employees or employees of their Subcontractor (if applicable). The provider must ensure onsite security as outlined above and must have experience (directly or through Subcontractor) in providing data security and remain responsible for any data breaches. Program Provider must indemnify the City of any harm, damages or any other liabilities that result from a data breach.

E. Vendor Performance Reporting Requirements & Data Tracking

The program provider will be expected to engage in regularly scheduled meetings with MOCJ and submit regular reports, with frequency to be determined by MOCJ in coordination with the program providers for the duration of the program. The program provider will be expected to have a plan in place to track and use performance metrics – in particular regarding engagement rates, retention rates, and fidelity to the curricula. For example, the program provider will be expected to use pre-/post-surveys to measure client progress (if feasible and safe), or identify and implement alternate measures. The program provider will maintain a database for the purpose of monitoring participant progress and program staff performance internally, reporting on individual compliance and progress to the Courts, and generating and submitting de-identified reports regularly to MOCJ. The program provider will ensure sufficient data and staff to perform the aforementioned activities. The provider will also allow for and coordinate site visits and observations of the curricula by MOCJ and stakeholders.

Program success will be determined by providers who must measure and report to MOCJ regularly:

- Program engagement rates of 70% or higher (e.g., program attendance such as individual and group sessions)

- Program completion rates of 70% or higher within 14 months of intake

IV. PROPOSED CONTRACT AND PAYMENT STRUCTURE

It is anticipated that there will be multiple contracted providers across all five boroughs. Providers will be able to apply for one or more boroughs, and may enter into subcontracts with other services providers to deliver the services outlined above.

The contract will include a line-item payment structure subject to annual deliverables and milestones as agreed upon with MOCJ.

V. FUNDING

Annual funding amount shall not exceed \$2,200,000 across all five boroughs per year, for a total agreement amount not to exceed \$6,600,000 for three years.

VI. CONTRACT PERIOD

It is anticipated that the first contract term will be for a period of three years starting on July 1, 2024, with the option to renew twice for three years each for a total of 9 years.

VII. BASIS FOR AWARD

Award selections will be based on the highest technically rated proposal(s). The applicant selected for award will have demonstrated successful experience providing similar services to similar populations as those targeted by the RFP. Proposals will be evaluated according to criteria that will include successful relevant experience, organizational capacity, and proposed approach to the program model.

VIII. PROCUREMENT TIMELINE

It is anticipated the RFP will be released in January 2024 with contracts starting July 1, 2024.

IX. USE OF PASSPORT

PASSPort is a web-based system maintained by the cof New York to manage procurement. To submit comments to the upcoming RFP, all vendors must create an account within the PASSPort system. Please visit www.nyc.gov/passport to create an account or to log into the system to view this Concept Paper and the future RFP.

X. REQUIRED SERVICE PRE-QUALIFICATIONS

The Abusive Partner Intervention Programming 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>.

XI. COMMENTS

Please email written comments to MOCJProcurements@cityhall.nyc.gov no later than **January 26, 2024**. Place “APIP Concept Paper” in the subject line. Questions regarding this RFP must be transmitted in writing to the Agency Contact. Please email comments to MOCJProcurements@cityhall.nyc.gov.