



Legislation Text

File #: 23-0095, Version: 1

**Contract Request Template (Contracts; IGAs; Leases)**

**Date Submitted: 2-6-2023**

**Requesting Agency: Denver County Court  
Division:**

**Subject Matter Expert Name: Kristin Wood  
Email Address: Kristin.Wood@denvercountycourt.org  
Phone Number:**

**Item Title & Description:**

*(Do not delete the following instructions)*

*These appear on the Council meeting agenda. Initially, the requesting agency will enter a 2-3 sentence description. Upon bill filling, the City Attorney's Office should enter the title above the description (the title should be in **bold** font).*

*Both the title and description must be entered between the red "title" and "body" below. Do **not** at any time delete the red "title" or "body" markers from this template.*

**A resolution approving and providing for the execution of a proposed Grant Agreement between the City and County of Denver and the Caring for Denver Foundation concerning the "Forensic Peer Navigator" program and the funding therefor.**

Approves a grant agreement with Caring for Denver Foundation for \$514,555 and through 7-31-2024 for the Denver County Court Problem Solving Courts to add two Forensic Peer Navigators and a one Forensic Peer Supervisor to help connect individuals who are involved in the Denver County Court system with community supports and services, citywide (COURT-202266269). The last regularly scheduled Council meeting within the 30-day review period is on 3-13-2023. The Committee approved filing this item at its meeting on 2-8-2023.

**Affected Council District(s) or citywide? Citywide**

**Contract Control Number:** COURT-202266269

**Vendor/Contractor Name (including any "DBA"):** Caring for Denver Foundation

**Type and Scope of services to be performed:**

Denver County Court submitted a grant application to Caring for Denver to expand services to their existing problem-solving courts

by expanding the Forensic Peer Navigator Program by adding two additional Forensic Peer Navigators and a Forensic Peer Supervisor. In August 2022, Denver County Court received Notice of Grant Award from Caring from Denver Foundation. On December 21, 2022, Denver County Court and Caring for Denver executed a grant agreement for \$324,216/year one and \$190,339/year two for a total of two years with a total grant award of \$514,555. (Grant ID: GR00002802, Award number: AWD-00001381, Jaggaer contract number: COURT-202266269.

In 2020, Denver County Court was awarded a \$600,000 grant from Caring for Denver to expand services to their existing problem-solving courts by implementing a Forensic Peer Navigator Program. This program has been successful and connected individuals to over 900 community resources and agencies. Denver County Court was successful in converting 3 of the 4 peers into FTEs in January 2023.

Individuals involved in and coming out of the criminal justice system face barriers to reintegration to the community at every turn, including but not limited to; lack of substance misuse and mental health treatment, housing, sparse employment opportunities and abridged access to medical and prenatal care. These impediments and barriers pose serious threats to recovery and success of individuals.

The experience with the criminal justice system impacts an individual's life in many ways and it is best understood by individuals who have experienced it as a consumer. Forensic Peer Navigators will continue to increase treatment engagement and recovery, help support sense of hope and self-empowerment, improve social functioning and overall quality of life, and decrease hospitalizations.

The peers are accessible through the Court's specialty programs and dockets, at a minimum. Currently these include the Helping, Engaging, Motivating (HEM) Program, Wellness Court (a mental health treatment court), Sobriety Court (a DUI Treatment Court), and REACH (Resilience, Empowerment, Autonomy, Community, Hope). The peers are available for direct connection in courtrooms, able to meet with individuals outside of probation/court, support participants going to treatment agencies and service providers, facilitate transportation or travel with participants to treatment agencies/providers, support participants in obtaining and attending intakes, and be a bridge between the returning individual and the community.

**Scope of work:**

Denver County Court will expand its current Forensic Peer Navigator program by adding two additional forensic peer professionals and a supervisor for the peers. The team currently consists of four peer professionals. The forensic peer team is present on a regular basis in the City and County Building, Lindsey-Flanigan Courthouse, the Downtown Detention Center, County Jail, the Probation Building, Outreach Court, and various community providers and agencies. They actively engage individuals in conversation, directly connect individuals to recovery supports, community resources, and services. The peer professional team meets an individual where they are, serving as an advocate, a support, an equal, to assist individuals in their own recovery and criminal justice journeys.

Since November 2020, the peer professionals have connected individuals to 929 resources and services. The top resources connected to are Recovery Support Groups and Meetings, Second Chance Center, Wellpower, Criminal Justice Connection and Support, Denver Human Services, RTD-transportation support, Housing resources, Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, Employment, Stout Street Foundation.

The peer professionals will continue to serve individuals who are interested in recovery utilizing the experience of someone who has been in the criminal justice system, in recovery, and has been and continues to be successful in their journey. In the last 12 months the peer professional team has served over 370 individuals. Due to various reasons, the peer team largely operated the last 12 months without full staffing, limiting the number of individuals the program could serve. The return to business as usual in society and in the Court the last few months has increased the ability of the peer professionals to connect with individuals in-person. The program began virtually in 2020 due to public health concerns and for much of 2021 continued mostly virtual operations. In the first five months of 2022, the Forensic Peer Navigator program has served over 140 individuals. It is anticipated Denver's large return to pre-COVID 19 pandemic operations will support an increasing number of individuals the peer professional team is able to connect with. As SAMHSA's 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health indicates the COVID-19 pandemic adversely impacted mental health, including increasing drug or alcohol use among people who used substances in the last year; it is anticipated there will be an even greater need for peer professionals in the Court.

The Forensic Peer Navigator service started during the pandemic and was largely operated when Court operations were virtual. Denver County Court would like to continue the program for another year to increase data on outcomes and impact, and based on demand, expand the program to an additional 2 forensic peer professionals and a supervisor for the 6 peers. Adding two additional forensic peer professionals and a forensic peer supervisor for the peers will allow more people to connect and be served by the peer service and expand the possibilities for the program. Work-life balance and self-care is critical in supporting our peer professionals in their success and their abilities to connect and support clients. Current demand for the connection to the forensic peers outweighs the ability of the current team.

Intended Changes:

Increased connections to the recovery community, treatment, and community supports. Increase in recovery plans and recovery capital. Increase in retention, job satisfaction, and self-care of peer professionals. Increase in accurate data collection and analyzation. Continuing the forensic peer navigator program and expanding the team will allow more individuals in the criminal justice system to connect with and be supported by a peer. We have also learned the importance of work-life balance and self-care in the peer profession and recognize the forensic element of the work the peers do supports active engagement in self-care activities, networking with other peer professionals, and a supervisor dedicated to this professional workforce.

Measuring Progress:

DCC will track qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data will be collected by utilizing participant surveys and anecdotes of participants to assist in identifying areas of success, challenge and ways to improve. Success is increasing quality of life outcomes, linkages to recovery community, engagement rates, and self-advocacy and a decrease in criminal justice involvement.

- Increase recovery capital as measured by the Brief Assessment of Recovery Capital (BARC-10)
- Decrease substance misuse
- Increase recovery planning
- Increase linkages to recovery community
- Increase engagement rates and self-advocacy
- Increase connections to community treatment and service providers via warm-connection
- Decrease involvement in the criminal justice system
- High completion rates of programming and/or probation
- Demographic and socioeconomic data to ensure equity and inclusion.
- Number individuals referred to peer
- Number of individuals contacted by peer
- Number of individuals engaged with peer (Engagement = 3+ contacts with a peer)
- Types of resources and services served individual chooses to engage with
- Referral sources
- Housing pre-post connection
- Employment pre-post connection
- Drug(s) of Use

Timeline and Milestones:

Target 400 individuals served per year. December 2022 begin the hiring process for the Peer Supervisor. February 2023 Peer Supervisor begins employment. January 2023 begin the hiring process for the two Peer Professionals. March 2023 Two additional Peer Professionals begin employment. June 2023 Six-month program data analyzation and report. June 2023 Recidivism pre-post report. Monthly program reports shared with team to generate feedback, areas of success, challenges and program improvements and changes. Participant surveys have been designed and are currently being implemented. The results will be included in the monthly reports. Peer satisfaction surveys are completed on a monthly basis. Results are shared with the team and the supervisor to support conversation on areas of success and areas of concern. Surveys are anonymous. Education and support on the peer profession will be a priority for Denver County Court. Lunch and learns, presentations, open office hours, an open house, are examples that were implemented in the first two years of the current funding. We will continue this outreach and expand to include a monthly email out to the organization regarding different aspects of the peer profession, recovery, self-care, and the community. Organize at least quarterly team building and/or peer professional events and activities to support self-care and health of the peer professionals.

**Location (if applicable): Citywide**

**WBE/MBE/DBE goals that were applied, if applicable (construction, design, Airport concession contracts): N/A- grant**

**Are WBE/MBE/DBE goals met (if applicable)?**

**Is the contract new/a renewal/extension or amendment?**

new

**Was this contractor selected by competitive process or sole source?**

**N/A- grant**

**For New contracts**

**Term of initial contract:**

8/1/2022-7/31/2024

**Options for Renewal:**

**How many renewals (i.e. up to 2 renewals)?**

**Term of any renewals (i.e. 1 year each):**

**Cost of initial contract term:**

\$514,555

**Cost of any renewals:**

**Total contract value council is approving if all renewals exercised:**

**For Amendments/Renewals Extensions:**

**Is this a change to cost/pricing; length of term; terms unrelated to time or price (List all that apply)?**

***If length changing***

**What was the length of the term of the original contract?**

**What is the length of the extension/renewal?**

**What is the revised total term of the contract?**

***If cost changing***

**What was the original value of the entire contract prior to this proposed change?**

**What is the value of the proposed change?**

**What is the new/revised total value including change?**

***If terms changing***

**Describe the change and the reason for it (i.e. compliance with state law, different way of doing business etc.)**