



Request for Proposal for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant

Issued: March 11, 2026

Due on or before: April 10, 2026

Service for September 1, 2026 – March 31, 2029

Inquiries and proposals should be directed to:

Emily Knott

Head Start Program Director

Inter-County Community Council

PO Box 189 Oklee, MN 56742

218.796.5144 Ext. 1020

Please consider sending your completed Request for Proposal (RFP) to ICCC.

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General Information

1. Purpose

The Request for Proposal (RFP) is to contract for mental health services for Head Start and Early Head Start families and staff.

2. Who May Respond

Only mental health providers, who have the licensure, education, experience and attributes that support high quality services.

3. Instructions on Proposal Submissions

- a. Closing Submission Date: Proposals must be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m. on *April 10, 2026*.
- b. Questions: RFP Questions should be directed to Emily Knott at 218.796.5144 ext. 1020.
- c. Conditions of Proposal: All cost incurred in the preparation of a proposal responding to this RFP will be the responsibility of the contractor and will not be reimbursed by ICCC.
- d. Instructions to Prospective Contractors:

Your proposal should be addressed as follows:

Emily Knott
Head Start Program Director
Inter-County Community Council
PO Box 189
Oklee, MN 56742

It is important that the Contractor's proposal be submitted in a sealed envelope clearly marked in the lower left-hand corner with the following information:

Request for Proposal for Mental Health Consultant
4:30 p.m., *April 10, 2026*.
Sealed Proposal

Failure to do so may result in premature disclosure of your proposal. It is the responsibility of the Contractor to insure that the proposal is received by ICCC by the date and time specified above. Late proposals will not be considered.

- e. Right to Reject: ICCC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP. A contract for the accepted proposal will be based on the factors described in this RFP.
- f. Small and/or Minority-Owned Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises and labor surplus are firms (200.321): Efforts will be made by ICCC to utilize small and/or minority-owned businesses and women's business enterprises. A

Contractor qualifies as a small business firm if it meets the definition of "small business" as established by the Small Business Administration (13 CFR 121.201).

g. Notification of Award:

- i. It is expected that a decision about selection of the successful contractor will be made by *April 17, 2026*.
- ii. Upon conclusion of final negotiations with the successful contractor, all contractors submitting proposals in response to this Request for Proposal will be informed, in writing, of the name of the successful contractor.

4. Description of Entity

Inter-County Community Council is a private non-profit community action agency serving the counties of Clearwater, East Polk, Pennington and Red Lake in Northwestern Minnesota. Through varied and multiple programs, Inter-County Community Council helps people to build a better Minnesota. These programs include, but are not limited to, Energy Assistance, Family Services, Weatherization, Employment & Training, and Head Start, Early Head Start and Food Shelf.

5. Code of Conduct

- a. No employee, officer or agent may participate in the selection, award or administration of a contract if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. Such a conflict of interest would arise when the employee, office, or agent, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract. Conflict of interest from will be completed for all parties performing work under the contract.
- b. Contractors are subject to the non-procurement debarment and suspension regulation implementing Executive Orders 12549 and 12689, 2 CFR part 180. These regulations restrict awards, sub awards, and contracts with certain parties that are debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in Federal programs or activities. Contractor will have to certify in writing they have not been debarred from the federal government.
- c. Contractors will be held to a code of ethical conduct, including confidentiality of children, staff and families that we serve. When doing individual observations that children are never left alone or unsupervised.

6. Options

- a. It is expected that the contract shall be a one-year contract with options for four additional one-year periods

Specification of Service

1. Program Description

Head Start Program is a comprehensive child development program. Our approach to mental health services and supports for children and families is supportive, non-judgmental, strengths-based, and culturally and linguistically responsive and sensitive. Our program is family-centered and driven and relies on developing collaborative partnerships between families and staff. We employ a combined model of preschool with family services and outreach.

2. Position Description

The Mental Health Consultant (MHC) is responsible for providing mental health consultation and support to Head Start and Early Head Start staff, children, and families. The MHC will perform a broad range of services, including early childhood mental health consultation in classrooms, training and coaching of staff; parent training; screening, assessment and referral services for children and families. The MHC will also collect data, maintain records, and support compliance in all facets of Head Start Performance Standards and State regulations.

Duties & Tasks:

General Classroom Observations, Consultation & Coaching (40%)

- Visit each classroom to conduct an on-site observation a minimum of 6 times per school year, up to one time per month (September-May).
- Provide consultations to classroom staff following on-site observations to discuss concerns and identify strategies for implementation.
- Provide written observation notes following each observation / consultation.
- Provide guidance on development of behavior plans for individual children demonstrating behavior concerns in the classroom.
- Provide child development information to staff related to social-emotional development and mental health.
- Provide guidance to staff on interpreting social-emotional screening and assessment findings.
- Provide guidance and model developmentally appropriate activities for children and effective ways to work with and support young children.

Programmatic Consultations (40%)

- Conduct reflective practice sessions with staff at regular staff meetings in small group settings, approximately 90 minutes per group. Will provide 4-5 sessions per year with staff at scheduled staff training days conducted in Oklee, MN. Sessions include:
 - Opportunity for staff to verbalize concerns about behavior issues in classrooms, on home visits, and at family events.
 - Support and training related to social-emotional and mental health issues regarding children and families.
- Provide input for the development and implementation of mental health program and policy, through participation in the Health Advisory Committee.

- Provide additional consultation for staff identifying concerns between general classroom consultations.

Individual Child Observation, Assessment & Referral (10%)

- Conduct individual consultations with staff and/or parents regarding individual child concerns. Including, but not limited to:
 - Additional classroom observations
 - Assessments of child on-site, as requested by parent
 - Provide additional strategies for classroom or home implementation
 - Provide child and family referral and follow-up to community services

Other (10%)

- Provide feedback following staff consultations and classroom observations to Head Start Director, Health Coordinator and Child & Family Services Coordinator
- Contribute to federal, state, and local reporting requirements.

3. Delivery Schedule

The MHC services are provided within a flexible work schedule at the choosing of the provider to be in compliance with the contractual language of the agency. The MHC will not exceed the threshold of hours through the program year however working hours may include some early morning or evening work. This Request for Proposal will award a contract for a 12-month period and will coincide with our Federal Grant cycle.

4. Programmatic Qualifications

a. Knowledge

- Demonstrated understanding of infant and early childhood mental health.
- Demonstrated understanding of differences in mental health services and concepts across cultures.
- Demonstrated knowledge of child mental health services system.
- Demonstrated experience with clinical documentation.
- Experience formulating and writing behavior plans.
- Experience with evidence-based practices and curricula to promote early childhood mental health.
- Knowledge of Head Start is desirable.

b. Skills

- Build and maintain strong, collaborative relationships with Head Start staff and families.
- Partner with providers as a member of a diverse team.
- Lead and facilitate trainings for parents and staff.
- Conduct standardized screens and assessments, preferably for young children.
- Use results of screens and assessments to guide work with families, set goals, and develop individualized plans.
- Refer providers and families to appropriate community services.
- Communicate effectively with diverse groups both verbally and in writing.
- Organize tasks and manage time effectively,

- Organize and document assessment and screening results and use for ongoing quality improvement.

c. Education & Experience

- Master's Degree required, preferably in Social Work, Psychology, Counseling, or related field.
- Clinical license highly desirable.
- Minimum of 2 years direct experience in a mental health setting providing prevention services and/or mental health therapy to children and families.
- Certification as Qualified Mental Health Provider (QMHP) preferred.

d. Other Requirements

- Ability to occasionally lift up to 50 pounds.
- Must have valid Driver's License and proof of insurance.
- Maintain First Aid and CPR certification.
- Maintain compliance with Criminal History Registry, Department of Health and Department of Human Services Child Abuse and Neglect Registry.

5. Supervision

The MHC will report to the Head Start Program Director and Family Engagement Coordinator, who will assign and oversee the work of the MHC.

Response Requirements & Scoring Criteria

The Contractor, in its proposal, shall, as a minimum, include the following:

1. Contact information of submitting individual/organization, Size & Structure (Required)

Organization Name, if applicable
Contact Name
Address, City, State, Zip
Phone Number
Email
Size
Structure

2. Service Approach (20 points)

Please describe how you would provide the services detailed in the Position Description within the context outlined in the Program Description, specifically addressing (a) prior relevant experience, (b) your approach to promoting children's mental health, including your work with young children in child care or other early education settings, and (c) your approach to effectively implementing mental health consultation in Head Start, including your ability to partner and build relationships with families and staff.

3. Cultural Responsiveness (10 points)

Please describe your experience working with culturally, socially, and economically diverse families and staff.

4. Continuity of Services (10 points)

Please describe how you will ensure continuity of service from the same mental health consultant by including your plan for supporting their professional development, supervision, and retention.

5. Staff Qualifications (5 points)

Describe the qualifications of staff to be assigned to the position described in this RFP. Descriptions should include:

Team makeup
Overall supervision to be exercised
Prior experience of the individual staff members to be included in providing the service

6. References (5 Points)

Please include letters and contact information from three (3) references who can comment on your ability to provide similar services as described in this RFP.

7. Cost Estimate (10 Points)

Please submit a standard fee schedule (hour's rates, monthly rate or other fee schedule) to this contract. Travel cost should be included in fee schedule, not as a separate cost.

8. Additional Licensure (If Applicable)

Any additional Licensure should also be provided with the submission.

9. Certifications (Required)

Copy of Liability Insurance
Copy of Workers' Compensation Policy

Proposal Evaluation

1. Submission of Proposals

When submitting, proposals shall include a copy of all response requirements; scored and required. All documents will become part of the contract.

2. Nonresponsive Proposals

Proposals may be judge nonresponsive and removed from further consideration if any of the following occur:

- The proposal is not received in a timely manner in accordance with the terms of this RFP
- The proposal does not follow the specified format.
- The proposal does not include the Certifications.

3. Proposal Evaluation

Evaluation of each proposal will be scored according to the scoring criteria laid out in the previous section. In compliance with 2 CFR Part 200.319 – Competition, no geographic preferences will be given in the evaluation of this proposal, since the section states, “The non-Federal entity must conduct procurements in a manner that **prohibits the use of statutorily or administratively imposed state or local geographical preferences in the evaluation of bids or proposals**, except in those cases where applicable Federal statutes expressly mandate or encourage geographic preference.”

Service Approach – (a) prior experience (b) promoting children’s mental health (c) consultation in Head Start, family/staff relations	0-20
Cultural Responsiveness - experience working with culturally, socially, and economically diverse families and staff	0-10
Continuity of Services - plan for supporting their professional development, supervision, and retention	0-10
Staff Qualifications - Team makeup, supervision, and prior experience of the individual staff members to be included in providing the service	0-5
References – (3), your ability to provide similar services	0-5
Cost Estimate - standard fee schedule	0-10
Total	0-60

4. Review Process

In compliance with Uniform Guidance 2 CFR Part 200.319 – Competition, ICCC has conducted this procurement in a manner that prohibits the use of statutorily or administratively imposed state or local geographical preferences in the evaluation of bids

or proposals, except in those cases where applicable federal statutes expressly mandate or encourage geographic preference.

ICCC may, at its discretion, request presentations by or meetings with any or all Contractors to clarify or negotiate modifications to the Contractors' proposals.

However, ICCC reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposals submitted. Therefore, proposals should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms, from both technical and price standpoints, that the Contractor can propose.

ICCC contemplates award of the contract to the responsible Contractor with the highest total points.