

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

REQUEST DATE: November 5, 2014

REQUEST CLOSING DATE: November 26, 2014

OVERVIEW AND INSTRUCTIONS

1. The United States District Court for the Northern District of California (the “court”) seeks proposals from community-based legal services providers for:
 - a. Operation of a part-time legal help center providing limited-scope legal assistance to pro se litigants at the San Jose Courthouse (located at 280 South First Street, San Jose); and
 - b. Provision of placement services under the Federal Pro Bono Project to secure *pro bono* representation in qualifying cases for litigants in federal district court.
2. Applicants may submit proposals to fulfill one or both of these two functions. The maximum annual budget for both functions is \$75,000; the approximate allocation of resources between the two functions should be 85% for operation of the legal help center and 15% to provision of placement services.
3. Proposals must be submitted by email no later than 4:00 p.m. on the closing date to: Lynn_Fuller@cand.uscourts.gov.
4. The court contemplates that non-profit community-based legal services providers will apply. A complete proposal must:
 - a. Describe the work, mission, funding sources and governance structure of the applicant.
 - b. Describe the proposed management and service-delivery approach of the grant-funded program.
 - c. Include, if applicable, a resume and references for each proposed staff member for the program.
 - d. Estimate, in numbers of hours per week or percentage of program time, how program staff time will be allocated among the various activities and services described in the program description.
 - e. Include a draft budget using the court’s budget worksheet for grant-funded programs (attached).
5. Proposals omitting any of the required components will not be considered.
6. All questions or clarifications must be submitted via email no later than three working days before the closing date to the court representative identified above.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

The court has provided grant-funded legal help centers in its San Francisco, San Jose and Oakland Courthouses since 2008, 2010 and 2013, respectively. The current grant term for the program in the San Jose Courthouse will expire December 31, 2014. The court seeks proposals from qualified applicants to continue the operation of this program.

SCOPE

The proposal should provide a draft budget and estimate the cost of delivery of services for the period of one year using the attached budget worksheet.

Legal Help Center Function

The grantee will assign a staff attorney to work in the San Jose Courthouse. Ideally, on-site services will be provided 24 hours per week on a schedule to be determined.

The staff attorney will provide limited-scope services to individuals who are interested in filing or are *pro se* parties to actions in the San Jose Courthouse including, but not limited to:

- Assistance with determining whether to file a lawsuit in federal court;
- Substantive legal and procedural advice regarding questions arising in all stages of litigation, from pre-filing to post-disposition;
- Explanations of court orders, opposition pleadings, discovery processes and court rules and procedures;
- Assistance with bringing and opposing motions, propounding and responding to discovery requests, and litigation strategy;
- Assistance with preparation for case management conferences, hearings, settlement conferences, mediations, and other court appearances;
- Screening and identifying cases appropriate for *pro bono* representation;
- Referrals, as appropriate, to state bar-approved lawyer referral services, social service, and other agencies and organizations that serve indigent and disadvantaged populations.

In addition, the staff attorney will:

- Collaborate with court staff and the staff attorneys at the court's other legal help centers on the development of educational materials for *pro se* litigants;
- Publicize the legal help center's services within the courthouse and in the community;
- Maintain detailed records regarding the services provided and provide data to the court at least annually in the manner and format requested by the court.

The court will provide office space and security. The grantee will provide all other equipment and supplies necessary to perform this function, such as office furniture, computer and related equipment, Internet service, telephone service, legal research services and office supplies.

In addition, the grantee will:

- Maintain malpractice insurance that will cover the staff attorney and any volunteer attorneys and interns; and
- Report regularly to the court on the work of the legal help center and work with court staff to ensure that the legal help center is meeting the needs of the court.

Pro Bono Case Placement Function

The grantee will:

- Develop and maintain a panel of active attorneys ready and willing to provide pro bono representation in federal cases;
- Place cases referred by judges to the Federal Pro Bono Project with *pro bono* attorneys for full or limited-scope representation;
- Provide trouble-shooting support upon request to attorneys handling cases placed through the Federal Pro Bono Project;
- Thank and acknowledge attorneys for providing pro bono representation and collaborate with court staff on program promotion and recognition events; and

- Maintain malpractice insurance that will, if necessary, cover attorneys who accept cases for full or limited-scope placement through the Federal Pro Bono Project.

QUALIFICATIONS

Legal Help Center Function

Consideration will be given to legal services providers with demonstrated experience and success in:

- Providing limited-scope legal services to unrepresented individuals in civil cases for the purpose of facilitating access to courts for individuals facing educational, financial or other barriers to access;
- Hiring and supervising a staff attorney to function in an independent location;
- Recruiting and mentoring volunteer attorneys;
- Building collaborations with other agencies, including social service agencies (social services on staff are preferable) providing limited-scope representation;
- The staff attorney assigned to the legal help center must be an active member in good standing of the State Bar of California and also, preferably, a member of the bar of this court. Experience in the following areas is strongly preferred:
 - Federal law and procedure
 - Employment law and civil rights
 - Federal programs such as social security disability and veterans' benefits
 - Working with clients with mental health issues.

Pro Bono Case Placement Function

Consideration will be given to legal services providers with demonstrated experience and success in:

- Placing civil cases with unrepresented parties with *pro bono* counsel.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Potential applicants are encouraged to review the following documents and information available on the court's website:

- Web pages for pro se litigants (cand.uscourts.gov/proselitigants)
- Federal Pro Bono Project Guidelines (posted with this Request for Proposals)
- General Order No. 25, concerning appointment and reimbursement of pro bono counsel cand.uscourts.gov/generalorders
- *Representing Yourself in Federal Court: A Handbook for Pro Se Litigants* (the court's pro se handbook) (cand.uscourts.gov/prosehandbook)

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GRANT-FUNDED PROGRAM BUDGET WORKSHEET

Instructions for using the worksheet: Grantees and grant applicants are asked to organize budget items as set forth on this worksheet using their preferred program (e.g., Word, Excel). Please subtotal each section (Personnel, Non-Personnel Project Expenses and Indirect Costs) and total the whole budget.

- I. Personnel
 - A. Salaries (for any non-full-time position, show as percentage of FTE)
 - B. Other Payroll Costs & Benefits
 - 1. Payroll taxes (FICA, SUI, SDI, etc.)
 - 2. Workers Compensation
 - 3. Retirement
 - 4. Health Insurance (includes medical, vision, dental, short-term and long-term disability, and life)
- II. Non-Personnel Project Expenses (may be prorated, but site-specific costs should be identified as such)
 - A. Rent and Utilities
 - B. Program Costs (the following list is non-exclusive; additional items should be added as applicable)
 - 1. Insurance
 - 2. Library
 - 3. Membership dues
 - 4. Communication (telephone, internet, fax lines, etc.)
 - 5. Copying
 - 6. Training
 - C. Office Supplies
 - D. Furniture
 - E. Travel
 - F. Equipment Lease/Equipment maintenance (may include depreciation)
 - G. Other (contractor to provide more detail)
- III. Indirect Costs
 - A. Bookkeeping/Payroll/Finance
 - B. Administrative support (HR, IT)
 - C. Audit