



2012
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
FOR
OLDER AMERICANS ACT

FOR THE PERIOD OF
January 01, 2012 to December 31, 2012

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SECTION A. INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW OF THE FEDERAL OLDER AMERICANS ACT AND FLORIDA'S AGING NETWORK

In an effort to meet the diverse needs of the growing numbers of older persons in the United States, Congress passed the Older Americans Act of 1965. The Act has been amended several times since the original passage, but it is still the primary vehicle for organizing, coordinating and funding a system of community-based long-term care services to elders 60 years and older. Age is the primary eligibility factor for elders receiving services (60 years and older). However, priority is given to those with the greatest social and economic need, low-income minority individuals, individuals residing in rural areas, older individuals at risk of institutional placement, and older individuals with limited English proficiency.

Unique to the Act is its creation of Area Agencies on Aging (AAA). An Area Agency on Aging is a public or a private non-profit agency designated by the state to address the needs and concerns of older individuals within their PSA. Supervised by a State Unit on Aging, these entities are charged with the following:

1. Creating multi-year plans for the development of comprehensive, community-based services which meet the needs of older persons within their communities;
2. Providing information on available services, programs and policies that affect older persons;
3. Advocating for the improvement of services and rights of older persons and their caregivers; and
4. Contracting, coordinating and monitoring federal, state and local funding which support the operation of these community-based long-term care services which assist older persons to remain independent within their own homes and communities.

In Florida, the Department of Elder Affairs provides oversight to eleven AAAs. The Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, Inc. serves Planning and Service Area 5.

One of the primary features of the OAA, Title III program is county and community involvement in the planning and funding of the system of services for older persons. Each service provider must seek to expand the sense of community participation by expanding the use of volunteers, by involving qualified local persons in both policy making or advisory capacities, by collecting and analyzing information on the needs, opinions and preferences of older persons, by employing qualified staff from local sources, and by securing the required non-federal financial share (local match).

PASCO COUNTY PROFILE

Pasco, one of the top 100 fastest growing counties in the U.S., has 135,754 persons over the age of sixty. This represents 30.7 percent of the county population. The Pasco County 60+ population has increased 23.3 percent since 1990. The aged 85+ population accounts for 4.1 percent of the total population, and 13.4 percent of the 60+ population. The 85+ population increased 46 percent since 2004. The east and central portions of the county continue to grow rapidly. New Port Richey in west Pasco continues to have the largest population, with Zephyrhills in east Pasco ranked as second in total population. Rural sections of the county are found in central and east Pasco. Of the total 60+ population residing in Pasco County, 8.5 percent are low income. There are 1,100 minority residents over the age of 60 who are low income. There are 9,924 minority elders, representing 7.3% percent of the county's 60+ population. The number of minority persons age 60+ has grown 132 percent since 2004. Concentrations of non-white elderly are primarily located in East Pasco, especially Dade City, Trilby and Lacochee.

PINELLAS COUNTY PROFILE

Although a small urban land mass (280 square miles), Pinellas County has the larger total population of those aged 60+ in the PSA. There are 266,052 persons aged 60+ who reside in Pinellas County, comprising 28.8 percent of the county population. The 60+ population growth has declined .4 percent since 1990. More seniors are migrating to less congested areas of the state. The aged 85+ population accounts for 4.3 percent of the total population, and 14.9 percent of the 60+ population. The 85+ population increased 19.1% since 2004. Clearwater, Largo and St. Petersburg make up the greatest populated areas. Of those age 60 and older in Pinellas County 9.1 percent have incomes below the poverty level. The largest concentration of poor elders lives in St. Petersburg. The minority elderly population of 25,570 represents 9.6 percent of the county's 60+ population. This is an increase of 37.6% since 2004. There are 5,183 minority residents over age 60 with income below the poverty level. Concentrations of minority elders are primarily found in the south side of St. Petersburg and in Clearwater.

(2011 Florida County Profiles, Florida Department of Elder Affairs)

2. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this Request for Proposals is to secure providers for the provision of Older Americans Act services to be delivered to persons sixty years and older within the geographic area of PSA 5, which includes both Pinellas and Pasco Counties.

DOEA requires that all financial assistance awards and contracts in excess of \$10,000 shall be competitively bid, at least every three years. The Request for Proposals (RFP) process for calendar year 2012, complies with this requirement.

Case Management is not being funded through Older Americans Act. Therefore, Older Americans Act providers have a responsibility for outreach, targeting and prioritization, establishing eligibility, completing assessments for Older Americans Act services as well as having the ability to maintain the Client Information Registration and Tracking System (CIRTS) database including records, and receiving referrals from the Aging and Disability Resource Center.

Older Americans Act contracts procured through this Request for Proposals process may be renewed on a yearly basis for two years contingent upon satisfactory performance and the availability of funds. The contract amount and service levels will be negotiated prior to the renewal of the contract.

B. REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL SPECIFICATIONS

a. Bids are being accepted for the following services:

1. **Title IIIB – Gerontological Counseling (both Group and Individual) and Mental Health Counseling (Individual)**: One Provider to provide both counseling services in either Pasco or Pinellas Counties. The services provided must meet the Service Standards located in **Exhibit C.1 and C.2**

2. **Title IIIB – Adult Day Care**: One Provider to provide Adult Day Care services in either Pasco or Pinellas Counties. This service to be provided must meet the Service Standards located in **Exhibit C.3**

3. **Title IIIB – Chore**: One Provider to provide Chore services in either Pasco or Pinellas Counties. This service to be provided must meet the Service Standards located in **Exhibit C.4**

4. **Title IIIB – Legal**: One Provider to provide Legal services in either Pasco or Pinellas Counties. This service to be provided must meet the Service Standards located in **Exhibit C.5**

5. **Title IIIB – Homemaker**: One Provider to provide Homemaker services in either Pasco or Pinellas Counties. This service to be provided must meet the Service Standards located in **Exhibit C.6**

6. **Title IIIC1 and C2 Nutrition Services**: One Provider to provide Title C1 and Title C2 Nutrition services in either Pasco or Pinellas Counties. Title C1 Services include: Congregate Meals, Nutrition Counseling, Nutrition Education, and Outreach. Title C2 Services include: Home Delivered Meals, Nutrition Counseling, Nutrition Education, and Outreach. These services provided must meet the Service Standards located in **Exhibit C.7**

7. **Title IIIB Recreation Services**: One Provider to provide Recreation services in Pinellas County. The services provided must meet the Service Standards located in **Exhibit C.8**

b. Targeting

Procedure

- A. Each Request for Proposal released for Older Americans Act Services, will require each potential provider to assure activities are aimed at the following targeted groups:
Older Americans Act Section 306(a)(4)
- I. Providers will set specific objectives for providing services to:
 - a. older individuals with greatest economic need.
 - b. older individuals with greatest social need,
 - c. older individuals at risk for institutional placement,
 - d. low-income minority older individuals,
 - e. older individuals with limited English proficiency, and
 - f. older individuals residing in rural areas.
 - II. Include in each OAA Service Provider Application how the provider intends to meet the service needs of targeted populations.

In order to comply with the above requirements of the Older Americans Act and the Department of Elder Affairs, and to continue targeting efforts of previous years, service providers are required to include in the Service Provider Application the following information regarding services to each of the targeted categories.

1. Describe in detail the extent to which individuals in each of the 6 categories in section B.b.A.I. are served within the program, including number of persons served and the percentage of total clients specified for each category.
2. Develop a specific, measurable plan of action to satisfy the service needs of individuals in each of the same 6 categories in accordance with their need. Include specific activities.
3. Specify the proposed number of individuals to be served in 2012, specifying the number for each of the 6 categories and the percentage of total clients this number represents for each category.

Definitions

Greatest Economic Need: means the need resulting from an income level at or below the poverty line.

Greatest Social Need: means the need caused by non-economic factors, which include-

(A) physical and mental disabilities;

(B) language barriers; and

(C) cultural, social, or geographical isolation, including isolation caused by racial or ethnic status, that

(i) restricts the ability of an individual to perform normal daily tasks; or

(ii) threatens the capacity of the individual to live independently.

Low-income: is defined as below the poverty level which refers to the official poverty line as established by the Department of Health and Human Services.

Rural: is defined by the Department of Elder Affairs as residing in an area with a population density of less than 100 individuals per square mile or an area defined by the most recent U.S. Census as rural.

Risk for Institutional Placement: is defined as with respect to an older individual, that such individual is unable to perform at least 2 Activities of Daily Living without substantial assistance (including verbal reminding, physical cuing, or supervision) and is determined by the State involved to be in need of placement in a long-term care facility.

- B. The Provider will use outreach efforts that: identify individuals eligible for assistance under OAA with special emphasis on:
- a. older individuals residing in rural areas;
 - b. older individuals with greatest economic need (with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas);
 - c. older individuals with the greatest social need (with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas);
 - d. older individuals with severe disabilities;
 - e. older individuals with limited English proficiency;
 - f. older individuals with Alzheimer's disease or related disorders with neurological and organic brain dysfunction (and the caretakers of such individuals); and
 - g. older individuals at risk for institutional placement

c. Client Confidentiality

Service providers are responsible for maintaining confidentiality of information obtained in the delivery of services. No information about an older person, or obtained from an older person by a service provider, area agency or the state agency may be disclosed in a form that identifies the person, without the informed consent of the person or of his or her legal representative, unless disclosure is required by court order, or for program monitoring by authorized federal, state, or local monitoring agencies. It should be understood by older persons that failure to provide informed consent may preclude referral to another service agency.

Specific policies regarding confidentiality include:

1. Informed consent is to be obtained prior to referring an individual to another agency for services. Such consent may be written or oral; however, written consent is preferred, if feasible.
2. No individual will be denied services or access to services for refusal to provide such consent.
3. Information contained in the DOEA Client Information and Registration Tracking System (CIRTS) will be disclosed only in accordance with established DOEA procedures.
4. Neither the state, nor a state agency, may require any provider of legal assistance under Title III to reveal any information that is protected by the attorney-client privilege.
5. Information may be disclosed to the public by the state agency or the state only if such information could be disclosed under section 652 of title 5, United States Code, by an agency of the United States.
6. Lists of older persons in need of services or lists of older persons receiving services are to be used only for the purpose of providing services and may not be disclosed without the informed consent of each individual on the list and then only to those with a verified need to know the information.
7. The minimum requirement for safeguarding files and records is a locked cabinet or file.

All client information is confidential and shall only be disclosed with the written consent of the client or his/her guardian. Procedures shall be established to meet HIPAA and the HITECH Act requirements and protect confidentiality of records and to obtain the individual's informed consent prior to release of confidential information.

d. Client Information Registration Tracking System (CIRTS)

- Each Older Americans Act Provider must enter applicable and required data in CIRTS prior to receiving payment for services.
- Each service performed shall be recorded as specified in the service definition.
- Supporting documentation of services must be adequate to permit fiscal and programmatic evaluation as well as internal management. The Area Agency on Aging will not approve or pay any Request for Payment that is not supported by CIRTS documentation. Requests for Payment must be reconciled to CIRTS prior to submission to the Area Agency on Aging. A dated Invoice for Services and Contributions Report must be signed and submitted, with the service provider's Request for Payment, to the Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, Inc. Failure to ensure the collection and maintenance of CIRTS data may result in non-payment or suspension of contract.
- The cost for every service includes CIRTS data entry, invoicing, and other necessary administrative activities related to providing that service.

e. Partnership with the Aging and Disability Resource Center

The Area Agency On Aging Of Pasco-Pinellas, Inc. is a designated Aging and Disability Resource Center. This involves a partnership to offer multiple access points to a coordinated system of information about and access to services in the areas of aging, long term care and mental health resources. All Older Americans Act providers must participate as partners and attend the stakeholder workgroup meetings as requested.

f. Personnel

Each service provider must develop written personnel policies explaining the benefits and privileges available to employees while ensuring service availability during holidays. The following considerations are also expected:

Persons and/or agencies providing services shall:

- have appropriate training for the program and service being delivered;
- be licensed if required and not exempt;
- be registered if required;
- have background screening if required;
- comply with continuing education requirements;
- obtain any required state or local permit;
- meet building codes and standards; and,
- obtain any required insurance.

All persons in direct contact with clients shall:

- only handle the client's money if permitted by the service provided;
- not disclose confidential information; and,
- not accept monetary or tangible gifts from clients or their family members.

Paid staff and volunteers who have direct contact with clients shall receive basic orientation covering but not limited to the following topics, before providing services on a regular basis:

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- overview of the aging process;
- overview of the aging network;
- communication techniques with elders;
- abuse, neglect, exploitation and incident reporting;
- local agency procedures and protocols;
- client confidentiality; and,
- client grievance procedures.

Procedures shall be established to recruit, train, and schedule paid and volunteer staff. Procedures will include an annual evaluation of paid staff and documentation maintained in agency or personnel files.

Providers shall update and provide in-service training as needed. Any documented pre-service training of a particular staff person may be substituted for all or part of required annual training. Unless stated otherwise in law or rule, the number of hours and the provider determines training methods, and training materials.

g. Client Complaints and Grievances

- Procedures shall be established that provide for handling client complaints and for processing appeals regarding denial, reduction or termination of services to clients. These procedures must provide for informing all clients of the grievance/ appeals process, including prior written notification to client of activities related to client grievance/appeal and providing assistance to clients desiring to file a grievance/appeal. See **Exhibit F**.
- Procedures must be in compliance with requirements identified in the contract and the Area Agency on Aging's Grievance Procedure. See **Exhibit F**.
- Procedures shall be established to report to supervisory staff and the Area Agency, as appropriate, unusual incidents related to clients and service delivery. Incident reports shall be kept on file at provider agencies.

h. Board of Directors Involvement

Providers are expected to involve their governing Board of Directors in the oversight of services provided through contract with the Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, Inc. All providers must provide the Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas with copies of all minutes from Board of Director meetings detailing items and/or business discussed, within 30 days following the meeting.

i. Disaster Plan and Continuity of Operation Plan

All providers are required to develop and have in place at all times an agency Continuity of Operation Plan (COOP) and Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)/Disaster Plan, describing how the agency will function in the event of an emergency. The agency disaster plan shall be implemented in cooperation with the County plan when an emergency situation is imminent or has occurred. At a minimum, the service provider plan must include the following "Eight Disaster Planning Requirements" for their respective CEMPs/Disaster Plans as required by the Department of Elder Affairs.

1. Designation of an Emergency Coordinating Officer and alternate.
2. A procedure for contacting all at-risk provider clients, on a prioritized basis, prior to and immediately following a disaster.
3. A procedure for receiving referrals from other service agencies, conducting outreach, and delivering services to older Floridians, other than the existing clients, needing emergency relief assistance.
4. A procedure for after-hours coverage of Elder Helplines and other network services, if necessary.
5. A procedure to dispatch the Emergency Coordinating Officer or other staff members to shelters in areas outside of the disaster area, to assist older Floridian evacuees with special needs, if necessary.
6. A procedure to help at-risk clients register with the Special Needs Registry of local emergency management agencies.
7. A procedure for nutrition providers to distribute meals to clients prior to disasters; a procedure to distribute meals to older Floridian disaster victims and persons residing with older Floridian disaster victims after the disaster, if necessary.
8. A procedure to assign staff to Emergency Operations Centers and/or disaster assistance centers to ensure that older Floridian victims in the disaster area receive help.

j. Revisions to Approved Proposals

Once the contract is awarded to the successful bidder; the information and details of the proposal application may not be changed unless during the critique process and at the request of the AAAPP. In the event a provider deems that an adjustment is necessary, the provider must submit a written request to the AAAPP Program Administrator detailing the nature and purpose of the change. The AAAPP will issue a written approval or disapproval of the request. Until such time, the content of the proposal and expectations of the provider will remain unchanged.

SECTION C. GENERAL INFORMATION

a. Contact Person

*Jason Martino, Program Administrator
 Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, Inc.
 9887 4th Street North, Suite 100
 St. Petersburg, FL 33702
 Telephone: (727) 570-9696 x272 Fax: (727) 217-7733*

b. Funding

This program, entitled the Older Americans Act (OAA), is federally funded to serve elders aged 60 and older. The Area Agency on Aging will enter into contracts with service providers to deliver services. Older Americans Act clients cannot be determined eligible for services based on income criteria. LSP funds are general revenue funds that may be allocated to provide further support to Older Americans Act services in Pinellas and Pasco Counties. The Area Agency on Aging expects services to be provided for twelve months. Therefore, funding must be managed accordingly. Any deviations in expenditures must be explained in writing by the provider and approved by the Area Agency on Aging.

Pasco				
Service	Proposed Funding			
	OAA Allocation	LSP Allocation	Total Funding	Estimated Total Clients
OAA Title IIIB – Gerontological Counseling (Group & Individual) and Mental Health Counseling (Individual) Services	\$34,817	\$7,816	\$42,633	30
OAA Title IIIB – Adult Day Care	\$215,618	\$45,489	\$261,107	47
OAA Title IIIB – Chore	\$109,393	\$26,735	\$136,128	415
OAA Title IIIB – Legal	\$80,272	\$20,272	\$100,544	256
OAA Title IIIB – Homemaker	\$150,968	\$23,506	\$174,474	49
OAA Title IIIC1– Nutrition (Congregate Meals, Counseling, Education, Outreach)	\$237,586	\$72,745	\$310,331	482
OAA Title IIIC2– Nutrition (Home Delivered Meals, Counseling, Education, Outreach)	\$519,295	\$48,493	\$567,788	329

Pinellas				
Service	Proposed Funding			
	OAA Allocation	LSP Allocation	Total Funding	Estimated Total Clients
OAA Title IIIB – Gerontological Counseling (Group & Individual) and Mental Health Counseling (Individual) Services	\$172,096	\$47,979	\$220,075	550
OAA Title IIIB – Adult Day Care	\$379,641	\$61,998	\$441,639	68
OAA Title IIIB – Chore	\$177,613	\$32,910	\$210,523	105
OAA Title IIIB – Legal	\$67,182	\$15,713	\$82,895	507
OAA Title IIIB – Homemaker	\$191,999	\$38,623	\$230,622	87
OAA Title IIIC1 – Nutrition Services (Congregate Meals, Counseling, Education, Outreach)	\$788,000	\$0	\$788,000	758
OAA Title IIIC2 – Nutrition Services (Home Delivered Meals, Counseling, Education, Outreach)	\$763,585	\$301,818	\$1,065,403	741
OAA Title IIIB - Recreation	\$7,001	\$4,544	\$11,545	1,000

c. Match

Match of 10 percent is required for Older Americans Act funds. If applicable, no match is necessary for the LSP portion of the total funding. To determine the amount of match required for the proposed services, divide the total allocation of the funds by nine (9). For example, if the program allocation is \$30,000, divide by nine (9) equaling \$3,333.33 then multiply by .1. In this case, the required match is \$3,333 which is equal to 10 percent of the total funding. The match requirement may be satisfied by in-kind contributions including materials, commodities, transportation, office space, other types of facilities, or personal services, and contributions of money or services from functionally impaired elderly persons. The appropriateness of all match is determined through evaluation by the Area Agency on Aging.

d. Type of Contract

The contract for Older Americans Act services will be a fixed unit rate agreement. The provider shall be reimbursed for units of service as reported in CIRTS. All services must be provided within the parameters of the contract and approved Service Provider Application.

e. Method of Payment

Payment will be made to the contracted provider in accordance with the regulations and conditions in the Standard Contract.

f. Funding Award Selection Process

The timetable and description of the Area Agency on Aging PSA 5 (AAA) requirements under the Older Americans Act for applicant agency contract funding shall be as follows:

- AAA develops a written timetable for the contract review process which establishes the date for advertisement of the public hearing(s), advertisement of Request for Proposal (RFP) notices, due date for applications, the date by which selection of competitive and/or non-competitive applicants for funding is made, and the funded implementation date. The established timetable is made available to all potential applicants and the public.
- A Bidders Conference shall be held in accordance with the established timetable for those service contracts up for bid.
- Applicant agencies shall submit their applications to AAA in accordance with the established timetable. Notice of receipt of application shall be confirmed in writing within 30 days of submission.
- A Selection Team approved by the AAA Board of Directors shall review all submitted applications in accordance with the established timetable. The rating scale will be used to assess the degree to which the applicant's response meets the criteria. Verbal presentations may be required of applicants prior to the Selection Team finalizing their recommendation.
- Any proposals not submitted by the deadline or missing any of the fatal criteria identified in the Evaluation Tool will be rejected.
- The AAA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or waive minor irregularities when to do so would be in the best interest of the AAA and the State of Florida. Minor irregularities are those, which will not have a significant adverse effect on overall competition, cost or performance.
- The Selection Team shall submit a ranked list of the top bidders and make recommendations regarding specific agency(s) for contract award to the Program Planning Committee of the AAA Board of Directors.
- The Program Planning Committee will review the Selection Teams recommendations and make recommendations to the AAAPP Board of Directors
- AAA Board of Directors will award the contract based upon the recommendation made by the Program Planning Committee and on which bidder's offer is most advantageous to the AAA and the State of Florida. The decision to award a contract by the AAA Board of Directors shall be final and be made in accordance with the established timetable. Failure by an adversely affected applicant agency to file with the AAA a written notice of protest within 72 hours after posted notice of contract award shall constitute a waiver of hearing procedures and shall not be considered.
- After a final decision is made: AAA shall conduct optional Critique Meetings with applicants in accordance with the established timetable. Written critiques will be provided to all applicants at that time.
- The funded agency shall submit a revised application pursuant to critique requirements no later than forty-five (45) days prior to funding. Any revisions required by AAA not included in the revised application will be reflected as a special provision of the contract.
- Signed contracts are required prior to contract service implementation.

g. Proposal Deadlines

Below is the timetable covering major facets in the 2011 Older Americans Act Request for Proposal process. Proposals must be complete and received by 3:00 P.M. on August 29, 2011. **Proposals will NOT be accepted after this time.** (All specific times of day refer to Eastern Standard/Daylight Time.)

July 8, 2011	Legal Notices Published (St. Petersburg Times/Florida Administrative Weekly)
July 11, 2011	Advisory Council Review of 2012 Proposed OAA Allocations and approval to take to Public Hearings
August 3, 2011 at 9:30 AM	Pinellas Public Hearing/Distribution of Pinellas Requests for Proposals and Continuing Grant Applications or Electronically at https://www.agingcarefl.org/notices/OAA-bid Neighborly Care Network Dining Site Dunedin Masonic Lodge 1297 Michigan Boulevard, Dunedin, FL Guest Speaker: Senator Mike Fasano
August 4, 2011 at 9:30 AM	Pasco Public Hearing/Distribution of Pinellas Requests for Proposals and Continuing Grant Applications or Electronically at https://www.agingcarefl.org/notices/OAA-bid CARES Rao Musunuru, M.D. Enrichment Center 12417 Clock Tower Parkway Hudson, FL Guest Speaker: Representative John Legg
	<i>Please Note: Pasco and Pinellas Continuing Applications will be available at the Public Hearings, or they may be obtained from the Area Agency office after the Hearings by calling the St. Petersburg office to make arrangements.</i>
August 17, 2011 at 1:30 PM	Bidders Conference - Area Agency on Aging Conference Room, St. Petersburg, FL
August 22, 2011	Letter of Intent Due (Optional)
August 22, 2011	Last Day for Public Comments
August 29, 2011 at 3 PM	Applications (Proposals and Continuing Applications) Due
Aug 30-Sept.22, 2011	Critique of Continuing Applications
Aug 31-Oct 3, 2011	Selection Team Meetings - St. Petersburg Office; Specific dates TBA
TBA Oct. 17, 2011	Program Planning and Development Committee Meeting AAA Board of Directors Meeting - Approval of Proposed Applicant Agencies and Approval of Final Allocations
Nov. 9, 2011 at 3 PM	Final Applications Due
Jan. 1, 2012	Services Initiated

h. Bidders Conference

Certified Minority Business Enterprises are encouraged to participate in any bidders' conferences, pre-solicitation or pre-bid meetings that are scheduled. **Attendance at the bidders conference is not mandatory and attendance by a bidder is not a prerequisite for acceptance of a proposal by the Area Agency on Aging.** All interested parties and potential bidders, however, are strongly urged to attend the Bidders Conference.

i. Inquiries

No inquiries about the contents of the Request for Proposal or Service Provider Application will be accepted after completion of the Bidder's Conference. Written responses from the Area Agency on Aging to questions regarding the Request for Proposal will be sent to those who have provided complete mailing information.

j. Acceptance of Proposals

A public proposal opening will take place immediately following the deadline specified for receipt of proposals. Proposals received by the Area Agency on Aging pursuant to a Request for Proposal are exempt from public inspection and examination until such time as the Area Agency on Aging provides notice of decision or within 10 days after proposal opening, whichever is earlier.

Sealed proposals will be accepted at the front desk of the Area Agency on Aging, St. Petersburg Office, from December 18th through August 28th, during normal office hours of 8:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. All proposals **MUST** be received by August 29th, 2011 at 3:00 P.M. EST. Proposals will not be accepted after 3:00 P.M.

k. Number of Copies Required

The Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, Inc. requires (four) **4 bound** copies of each Request for Proposal response to be submitted. At least one (1) of the copies **must** contain original signatures, in blue ink, of an official of the potential provider agency who is authorized to bind the provider to the agency's proposal. This copy should be labeled "Original" and bear the name and address of the bidder organization. Each page of the proposal should be sequentially numbered and indexed.

The remaining bound copies must be a complete photocopy (or original). All copies must be submitted at the same time in one or more sealed envelopes marked "Response to OAA Request for Proposal" on the outside.

l. How to Submit a Proposal

Proposals must include all components of the Service Provider Application, **Exhibit B**. Proposals sent through the U.S. Mail must be sent Certified - Return Receipt Requested. All proposals, whether sent by U.S. Mail, hand delivered, via courier or other source of express delivery, must be addressed to:

**Sally Gronda, Executive Director
Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, Inc.
9887 4th Street North, Suite 100
St. Petersburg, FL 33702**

m. Notice of Contract Award

Contracts for services in Pasco and Pinellas Counties will be awarded to the proposals, which present the best offer of services being sought. Written notice of the contract award will be sent to all bidders who submitted a Proposal.

- n. Hearing Procedures for Bid Protests Regarding Procurement of Contractual Services Issues Causing Protest.** Any person or firm who has been affected adversely by a decision or intended decision concerning a bid solicitation or by a notice of contract award may file a written notice of protest with the contact person listed in the solicitation. See **Exhibit D**.

o. Cost of Preparation of Proposal

The Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, Inc. assumes no liability for any cost incurred by the respondent in responding to this Request for Proposal, nor for any other pre-contract costs. Cost of preparation of proposal is solely that of respondent.

p. Trade Secrets

The Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, Inc. is unable to assure confidentiality of information fitting the definition of "trade secrets" pursuant to section 812.081 Florida Statutes due to the lack of protection of "trade secrets" in Chapter 119 Florida Statutes.

The Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, Inc. also assumes no liability for disclosure or use of unmarked material containing trade secrets or other confidential material and may use or disclose the data for any purpose, and may consider that the proposal was not submitted in confidence and therefore is a public record pursuant to Chapter 119, Florida Statutes.

SECTION D. RESPONDING TO THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Proposals must include an accurate and completed Service Provider Application (SPA), **Exhibit B**, including but not limited to the following:

1. Complete and accurate responses to the Program Module
2. Complete and accurate responses to the Contract Module (**Electronic Formats for all required contract module sections can be found on the Area Agency on Aging Website at <http://www.agingcarefl.org/notices/OAA-bid> on August 4th, 2011.**)
3. Signature Statements
4. Supportive attachments as necessary.