

# **REGIONAL LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM** **REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

## **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

1. **Question:** Do the applicants need to budget the OAA Title VII and state LTCOP dollars separately or may the applicants simply budget for the total amount?

**Answer:** Applicants should budget for the total amount.

2. **Question:** Will current program contractors be permitted to carry over any Title VII money or must all funds be spent by 9/30/15?

**Answer:** No carryover of funds will be permitted after 9/30/15.

3. **Question:** If we are applying for multiple regions do we submit two separate proposal packages?

**Answer:** Yes. We ask that applicants submit a separate application for each region for which they are applying.

4. **Question:** In the cover page second line "Applicant's Total Budget" please clarify if this is the agency annual budget or the total budget for each region.

**Answer:** This is the total budget for each region.

5. **Question:** In "Program Specific Questions" #1 you have allowed 4,000 characters for the region(s) the applicant is applying for, are you looking for demographic information on these regions or just looking for the applicant regions?

**Answer:** For question #1, applicants need only to list the number of the region for which they are applying.

6. **Question:** I would just like to determine what Region Long Island falls under so that I can start the application process.

**Answer:** Please refer to the map found at <http://www.ltcombudsman.ny.gov/PropRegion/Proposed%20LTCOP%20Regions%20Map.pdf> to determine which areas of the state fall into each region. Please note that Region 1 (Suffolk County) has already been awarded through a previous RFA process.

7. **Question:** Is the sponsoring agency required to purchase volunteer training manuals? What are the prices and can the cost be included in the proposal budget?

**Answer:** No. The sponsoring agency is not required to purchase volunteer training manuals.

8. **Question:** RE: 11. B. p5 There is no place indicated to upload Attachment C – Work Plan. Should this information be distributed in the Objectives and Tasks section under the respective Tasks rather than completed in Attachment C?

**Answer:** Yes, the information requested should be documented in the Objectives and Tasks section under the respective Tasks. Should additional space be needed in order to adequately respond, additional information may be uploaded.

9. **Question:** RE: 11. B. p5 The Project Summary and Organizational Capacity forms are not listed in the required documents list, but are included on the Grants Gateway application. Is there any further direction to indicate the required content of these sections? The descriptions are very brief.

**Answer:** Those sections are generated by the Grants Gateway system and the system requires that those sections be answered. It is recommended that the questions be taken at “face value” and be answered accordingly.

10. **Question:** There appears to be little information regarding the expected roles of Project Liaison, Coordinator(s), and volunteer Ombudsmen positions. What are the expectations for these roles within the project and the relationships among the roles? What are the expectations in regard to support and supervision of volunteers by the Project Liaison and Coordinator(s)?

**Answer:**

The Ombudsman Program Coordinator Job Description is as Follows:

Preferred Minimum Qualifications:

Associate’s or Bachelor’s degree in social work, health, public administration, gerontology, law or related fields, plus experience in program management with at least one year experience in volunteer management. Potential candidate should have a demonstrated commitment to advocacy work with experience as a consumer advocate. However, a combination of education and experience may be substituted for educational requirements.

It is strongly recommended that the Coordinator of a Local LTCOP has three years of progressively responsible experience in the field of human services. At least one year of this experience should have been in the area of aging or long term care.

The Office of the State Long Term Care Ombudsman reserves the right to provide a waiver of these requirements at any time based on individual programmatic circumstances.

Job Description:

- Ensures overall program operation and compliance with Federal and State requirements
- In consultation with the State Ombudsman, hires, trains, promotes and terminates all program staff
- Direct supervision of program personnel as well as overall supervision of Ombudsman volunteers
- Conducts group supervision and training with supervisory personnel
- Closely monitors cases
- Ensures that the necessary number of active Ombudsman volunteers is maintained on an ongoing basis
- Meets with facility administrators to resolve facility/program conflicts, as necessary
- Responds to resident issues and concerns, as necessary
- Ensures the ongoing implementation of certification and in-service training sessions for Ombudsman volunteers conducted in accordance with State Ombudsman Program requirements
- Participates in Ombudsman volunteer training, as appropriate
- Maintains liaison with all appropriate County, State and Federal agencies to ensure that the program receives support from local agencies, legal assistance providers, advocates and provider groups
- Maintains contact with relevant agencies and programs to provide information and support for program activities
- Develops and implements programmatic administrative policies and procedures
- Recommends volunteers to the State Long Term Care Ombudsman for designation as Long Term Care Ombudsmen. Also identifies to the State Long Term Care Ombudsman those whose removal of certification as Long Term Care Ombudsman volunteer is recommended
- Ensures that Long Term Care Ombudsman volunteers are assigned to facilities in accordance with standards set by the State Long Term Care Ombudsman
- Ensures that all complaints are assigned to an Ombudsman for investigation and resolution, and that back-up procedures are implemented for assigning a substitute Ombudsman in the absence of the assigned Ombudsman
- Assures that any files maintained by the local Ombudsman Program are disclosed only at the discretion of the State Long Term Care Ombudsman, and that the identity of any complainant or resident of a long term care facility is not disclosed unless as specified by law
- Participates in an ongoing program of education and public awareness to address systematic problems and elder abuse as well as the program's need to recruit Ombudsman volunteers

- Presents the program's services in public forums, such as speaking engagements, agency fairs, radio/television interviews, etc.
- Assists with annual Volunteer Recognition Day events
- Provides public information and community education
- Completes New York State mandated 36-hour certification training
- Submits reports, records, etc. in a timely manner to document volunteer and programmatic activity to the New York State Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman in accordance with the requirements established by the State Ombudsman
- Conducts other duties as directed by the State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program.

The Volunteer Ombudsman Job Description is as Follows:

Required skills:

Mature and responsible, empathetic, positive communication abilities, resourceful, tactful, diplomatic, ability to persevere through challenging situations, open minded.

Responsibilities:

- Successfully complete 36 hour Ombudsman Certification Training
- Attend monthly in-service trainings
- Adhere to the NYSLTCOP code of ethics and other policies implemented by NYSLTCOP
- Regularly visit assigned facility
- Maintain resident confidentiality
- Receive, investigate and resolve residents' complaints
- Assist in the protection of residents' rights
- Inform Program Coordinator of critical issues/ lack of resolution to complaints
- Help empower residents and families to self-advocate when possible and appropriate
- Establish good working relationships with the facility's administrator and staff
- Work with resident and family councils to encourage interaction among residents and between residents and the community
- Attend resident council meetings when possible
- Encourage and assist in developing resident and family councils where none exist
- Maintain current and accurate records
- Complete monthly reporting forms accurately and on time
- Provide information and consultation to residents, families, facility staff and others as appropriate
- Have knowledge of the responsibilities and function of regulatory and community agencies
- Meet with the Department of Health staff during facility survey

11. **Question:** Will NYSOFA provide a template for the volunteer annual certification training or will agencies prepare this training individually? If prepared by the contracted agency does it require NYSOFA approval? Same with on-going in-servicing? Does NYSOFA provide templates or topics for required/recommended in-services?

**Answer:** The local program is required to plan and conduct certification training. The Office of the State Long Term Care Ombudsman has a certification curriculum with approved resources. The local certification training plan must be approved by the State Office. In addition, local programs are required to provide or arrange in-service training for volunteers. The State Office can assist local programs with identifying appropriate topics and resource materials.

12. **Question:** Can volunteers be reimbursed mileage?

**Answer:** Yes. However, the reimbursement amount cannot exceed the approved IRS rate.

13. **Question:** If applying for multiple regions can one budget be prepared for all regions or should we complete a budget page for each individual region? If required to complete separate budgets is this accomplished by submitting a separate proposal or is there a tool to open additional pages on Grants Gateway?

**Answer:** Please submit a separate proposal, including the budget, for each region for which the entity is applying.

14. **Question:** In regard to Region 3 which takes in all of NYC, can multiple agencies be granted funding to possibly handle different boroughs or is NYS looking to have just one grantee for the whole of NYC?

**Answer:** We are seeking one grantee for the whole of NYC (which is considered Region 3). However, that grantee will be allowed to subcontract the program on a borough by borough basis should the grantee desire to do so.

15. **Question:** If it is possible to apply for just certain boroughs, is it possible to get the demographics for the different boroughs?

**Answer:** It is not possible to apply for just certain boroughs. The applicant must apply for the whole of NYC (which is considered Region 3).

16. **Question:** There are 350 sites listed for Region 3. Currently there are 130 volunteers. There is mention of having someone assigned to each site as an advocate/ombudsman. Is it that the plan is to have someone assigned to each site or that some volunteers could be used across multiple sites?

**Answer:** The aspirational goal of the program is to have, at least, one volunteer in each of the facilities in Region 3. However, it is acceptable for one individual to cover more than one facility.

17. **Question:** The NYS Justice Center handles and investigates all allegations of neglect & abuse in NYS. How does the Ombudsman Program relate to the Justice Center? Does the Ombudsman Program forward certain complaints to the Justice Center when they find the complaint to be neglect or abuse?

**Answer:** The NYS Justice Center only investigates allegation of neglect and abuse in impacted adult homes. The Ombudsman Program refers appropriate complaints to the NYS Justice Center.

18. **Question:** In supporting the volunteers, is it possible to provide them with tablets and the internet to document their findings through the Ombudsmanager system when they investigate complaints?

**Answer:** If the contractor is able to financially support providing volunteers with tablets and internet access in order to document their findings that would be encouraged and desirable. The NYS LTCOP is not able to directly provide tablets and internet access to the volunteers.

19. **Question:** Are the facilities that are being provided this service required to provide access to the Ombudsman and how much access are they required to provide?

**Answer:** Yes, the facilities are required to provide Ombudsmen access under both Federal and state law. Please see Older Americans Act Section 712 and NYS Elder Law Section 218 for more detail. You may also consult NYS Public Health Law and NYS Social Services Law Section and the regulations thereunder (10 NYCRR § 411.1 and 18 NYCRR §485.13) for more information.

20. **Question:** Is a Coordinator of Volunteers for this program consider an Administrative cost or a Program cost?

**Answer:** A Program Cost.

21. **Question:** If an agency is to take on all of NYC, is it allowable to have more than one Coordinator?

**Answer:** Yes. It is allowable to have more than one Coordinator in a particular region.

22. **Question:** Are Administrative Assistants who are assigned directly to assist in the documentation of complaints & findings considered Administrative Costs or support costs?

**Answer:** Support Costs

23. **Question:** Will the document templates in Grants Gateway be updated to include forms that can be typed into or will we need to hand write or retype the templates? An example is the cover page that has a title of **Suffolk County Long Term Care Ombudsman Program**.

**Answer:** The forms will not updated as fillable forms. The forms can be completed by hand or the templates can be printed, typed and scanned in for resubmission. The forms that include any reference to Suffolk County have been updated. However, if an applicant already has an application in process the forms will continue to show Suffolk County. Those forms that show Suffolk County on them can still be submitted and the reviewers will know that the information contained therein will relate to the region(s) for which you are applying. If an applicant has already has an application in process and the forms showing Suffolk County presents a problem, please contact Mark Miller ([Mark.Miller@aging.ny.gov](mailto:Mark.Miller@aging.ny.gov)) and NYSOFA will email you an updated version of the forms with the proper references.

24. **Question:** I was wondering who will be handling the MWBE for any of the NYSOFA grants. We are planning to apply for the ombudsman grant and will have some questions. Thank you for your help.

**Answer:** Applicants should complete the MWBE forms to the best of their ability. If the applicant is awarded the contract, NYSOFA has an MWBE Coordinator who will work with the entities who are awarded contracts through this RFA to accurately complete the MWBE forms.

25. **Question:** Subcontracting is not clearly defined (or I missed it). We would like to write as the lead agency subcontracting with an Independent Living Center in three other locations to actually be in the local counties. Is there a limit to subcontracting and a specific process?

**Answer:** Entities awarded a contract through this RFA may subcontract the program to another entity. Contract awardees may not subcontract paid, certified program staff duties to individuals. All subcontracts must be written in

accordance with State and local standards and a copy of each executed subcontract must be forwarded to NYSOFA prior to payment by NYSOFA for expenditures incurred under such subcontracts.

26. **Question:** Running an NHTD does not put you in conflict as it has nothing to do with licensed facilities, correct?

**Answer:** The operation of a Nursing Home Transition and Diversion grant or program does not conflict with the mission of the NYS Ombudsman Program.

27. **Question:** I have seen many grants now with the MWBE requirement. I have not seen it at the statute's full 30%. That would be the equivalent of a full time staffing position. I am asking that this requirement be reconsidered for this particular grant. We are not procuring things that are conducive to MWBE, this is basically a staffing grant. To force 30% away from staffing will provide a huge disservice to the seniors in the facilities. Volunteers are getting harder to get, especially with the writing skills needed. Hiring qualified staff, at competitive salaries, to keep them long term is crucial. I would not like to see agencies or OFA's have to turn back this grant or not apply for it because of a lack of thoroughness is considering the MWBE requirement. Perhaps 10%-12% is doable.

**Answer:** Personal services, fringe benefits, utilities and travel are excluded costs and are not subject to the MWBE requirement. As an example, if the total grant amount was \$100,000 and \$85,000 of that amount was used for personal services, fringe benefits, utilities and travel, then only \$15,000 of the grant amount would be subject to MWBE requirements. So, when one multiplies \$15,000 by 30% this amounts to \$4,500.

28. **Question:** Under Program Specific Terms and Conditions, Section V. Program Specific Clauses, #27, page 49: It states that we will conduct criminal background checks on all employees and volunteers involved with the LTCOP program. What level of background check is required? Can we do a local check through our Sheriff's Department or do we need to do a national background check?

**Answer:** It is preferable that programs conduct a national criminal background check. However, initially, contractors will only be required to check the names of potential volunteers or employees against the NYS Sex Offender Registry. It is anticipated that contractors will be required to conduct national criminal background checks on all employees and volunteers sometime within the five (5) year contract period.

29. **Question:** In Part III Program Workplan, Attachment C, Under Part III, 5. Evaluation Questions, page 63: We are asked to describe our sustainability plan for supporting the program. Does this mean we will be expected to continue this program after the first five years without funding or will we be asked to continue the program as long as there is adequate funding from NYSOFA?

**Answer:** Contractors are not expected to continue to operate this program after the first five years without funding. It is anticipated that the program will be re-bid every five years. The question is seeking the contractor's ability to sustain the program during the five year contract period.

30. **Question:** In the NYS Grants Gateway for the Regional LTCOP, under the Forms menu, under Pre-submission Uploads, Application Cover Page, the header on the Application Cover Page states "Suffolk County LTCOP." (This is not the case on the PDF of the RFA document) My County leadership will not sign off on a document with this header. Will this document be corrected on the grants gateway prior to the submission deadline?

**Answer:** Yes. Any documents in Grants Gateway that refer to Suffolk County will be replaced/corrected before the submission deadline. However, if an applicant already has an application in process the forms will continue to show Suffolk County. Those forms that show Suffolk County on them can still be submitted and the reviewers will know that the information contained therein will relate to the region(s) for which you are applying. If an applicant has already has an application in process and the forms showing Suffolk County presents a problem, please contact Mark Miller ([Mark.Miller@aging.ny.gov](mailto:Mark.Miller@aging.ny.gov)) and NYSOFA will email you an updated version of the forms with the proper references.

31. **Question:** In the NYS Grants Gateway for the Regional LTCOP, under the Forms menu, under Pre-submission Uploads, the 'Mandatory Minimum Qualifications" document, #2, states that "The Sponsor currently has or will have upon award of the contract, a county wide presence, and physical office space, in the county of Suffolk, NY." (This is not the case on the PDF of the RFA document) We assume this is not a requirement. Will this document be corrected on the grants gateway prior to the submission deadline?

**Answer:** Yes. Any documents in Grants Gateway that refer to Suffolk County will be replaced/corrected before the submission deadline. However, if an applicant already has an application in process the forms will continue to show Suffolk County. Those forms that show Suffolk County on them can still be submitted and the reviewers will know that the information contained therein will relate to the region(s) for which you are applying. If an applicant has already has an application in process and the forms showing Suffolk County presents a problem, please contact Mark Miller ([Mark.Miller@aging.ny.gov](mailto:Mark.Miller@aging.ny.gov)) and NYSOFA will email you an updated version of the forms with the proper references.

32. **Question:** In the NYS Grants Gateway for the Regional LTCOP, the “Application Checklist” lists that the “Budget Summary and Supporting Budget Schedule (Attachment B)” are required parts of the application; however, these documents are not included in the “Pre-Submission Uploads.” The only reference to them is in the PDF of the RFA document. How do we include these documents as part of our application? Or will the budget-related questions that are part of the application on the NYS Grants Gateway fulfill this requirement?

**Answer:** The budget related questions that are part of the application in Grants Gateway will fulfill this requirement.

33. **Question:** A “Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire” is required as a part of the application; however, Counties are exempt from Vendor Responsibility Documentation Requirements. Will you be posting an exemption form as one of the attachments on the NYS Grants Gateway, in order that AAAs/County entities who are applying can report their exempt status?

**Answer:** County Government entities are not subject to Vendor Responsibility documentation requirements. There is no need to submit an exemption form.

34. **Question:** Are letters of support from AAAs in the covered region encouraged as part of the application?

**Answer:** Yes, letters of support from the Area Agencies on Aging with a particular region are encouraged.

35. **Question:** Under the Program Specific Clauses, #3 (RFA p.47), “To the extent practicable the AAA should employ at full-time Ombudsman Coordinator for every 2,000 long term care beds in its service area.” If the region has less than 2,000 long term care beds, can the Ombudsman Coordinator’s time be pro-rated accordingly?

**Answer:** No. It is required that each region has, at least, one full-time coordinator.

36. **Question:** Under the Program Specific Clauses #12 (RFA p.47), “The sponsor agrees that it will employ at least two paid staff members, including the Local Ombudsman Program Coordinator, for the Local Program who are certified ombudsmen.”
- a. Are these two paid certified staff required to be full time and 100% with the Local Program?
  - b. Can two paid certified staff be full time and work less than 100% with the Local Program?
  - c. Can either or both two paid certified staff be part time employees?

**Answer:** The coordinator must be a full-time employee, with his or her time dedicated 100% to the ombudsman program. While it is preferable that the second staff person be full-time with 100% of his or her time dedicated to the ombudsman program, this is not a requirement. The second staff person should be available and able to serve in place of the coordinator during any period when the coordinator is unavailable due to leave, illness, etc.

37. **Question:** Under the Program Specific Clauses #15 (RFA p.48), “The Sponsor agrees to ensure that the local Ombudsman Program Coordinator attends all training events required by the State Ombudsman, including the annual statewide Ombudsman Training Conference (Training Institute).”
- a. Is all paid staff required to attend the Training Institute and all required training events in addition to the local Ombudsman Coordinator?
  - b. If there is a subcontract, is it required that the subcontracted LTCOP staff attend the Training Institute and all required training events in addition to the local Ombudsman Coordinator?

**Answer:** All paid, certified program staff will be required to attend the Training Institute and any other training events as specified by the State Ombudsman.

38. **Question:** Under the Program Specific Clauses #21 (RFA p.48), “The Local Sponsor agrees that the Office of the State Ombudsman will conduct a formal assessment of the Local Ombudsman Program in the Sponsor’s service area, and will provide the summarized results to the chief officer of the Sponsor and to the AAA Directors in the Sponsor’s subject service area.” Does either the Sponsor or the Local LTCOP Coordinator have the right to review, rebut, comment on, or add to the summarized results that are disseminated by NYSLTCOP to the AAA Directors in the Sponsor’s subject service area?

**Answer:** The assessment is designed to review progress on work plan goals as well as to identify best practices, suggestions for program enhancements, and identify issues of program operation that need to be addressed in order to maintain compliance with program requirements. The information obtained during the assessment process helps the Office of the State Ombudsman provide constructive feedback and direction to assist the local ombudsman program manage and strengthen its operation. The assessment process provides an

opportunity for the LTCOP Coordinator and agency director to respond to the recommended or required changes and to offer suggestions.

39. **Question:** Under the Program Specific Clauses #27 (RFA p.49), “The Sponsor agrees to conduct criminal background checks on all employees and volunteers involved with the LTCOP in accordance with the requirements set forth by the State Ombudsman.”

- a. Is it now a requirement for employees and volunteers of AAAs to have criminal background checks when they work with LTCOP? In the past this has not been a requirement of NYSLTCOP for the county program in the AAA.

**Answer:** Yes, it is now a requirement that a criminal background check be completed for all employees and volunteers of the NYSLTCOP.

- b. Where can we find these written requirements?

**Answer:** The LTCOP is currently drafting a Program Instruction that will provide more detail regarding the requirements of the criminal background checks.

- c. It is required that the criminal background check be completed and the results known before a candidate can attend NYSLTCOP certification training?

**Answer:** It would be preferable that the background check be completed before a candidate attends the NYSLTCOP certification training, however if that is not possible, the background check must be completed prior to the candidate being accepted as an employee or volunteer.

- d. What level or type of criminal background check is required?

**Answer:** It is preferable that programs conduct a national criminal background check. However, initially, contractors will only be required to check the names of potential volunteers or employees against the NYS Sex Offender Registry. It is anticipated that contractors will be required to conduct national criminal background checks on all employees and volunteers sometime within the five (5) year contract period.

- e. Does the cost of the background checks come from the local LTCOP program allocation?

**Answer:** Yes.

40. **Question:** Under Review Panel and Evaluation Criteria, #11 (RFA p.14), “Describe your agency’s current budget, sustainability plan for supporting ombudsman program operations and your ability to meet standard accounting practices,” does the “sustainability plan” refer only to financial operations?

**Answer:** Yes.

41. **Question:** Under the NYS Master Contract for Grants, Section III, Payment and Reporting, Part G #2 (RFA p.29), are the described reporting requirements in addition to the current quarterly data audits performed by NYSLTCOP with the Local Program Coordinator, plus the annual NYSLTCOP formal assessment mentioned under Program Specific Clauses #21?

**Answer:** The reports listed in Part G #2 of page 29 of the RFA that are applicable and will need to be completed by successful applicants that are awarded a contract are as follows: An Expenditure Report (listed as Part G #2 ii) and Final Report (listed as Part G #2 iii). These reports are required in order for NYSOFA to issue payment to the contractor.

42. **Question:** Can a local sponsor decide to subcontract part or all of the program to another organization within the five year contract period, while still retaining its sponsorship?

**Answer:** Yes, with the approval of the New York State Long Term Care Ombudsman and the New York State Office for the Aging, the program can be subcontracted at any time during the five year contract period.

43. **Question:** There is no mention of Title III-B money, will we be receiving it in addition to the anticipated annual budget amount?

**Answer:** The budget amount included in the RFA includes all Federal and State monies available to fund that particular region.

44. **Question:** On the administrative worksheet we are we required to enter matching funds? We are unable to enter information in the “Other Funds” category.

**Answer:** Contractors are not required to enter match. However, if a contractor chooses to enter match, the contractor should include the Match Worksheet that is provided on Grants Gateway.

45. **Question:** In thinking about the M/WBE requirement, one possibility is to use an employment agency to provide clerical support, rather than hiring a person directly. That person's pay and fringe would be a purchased service, not salary and fringe, and as a purchased service, could also be contracted with an M/WBE firm. Would subcontracting for support staff per permitted under the terms of this RFA?

**Answer:** Subcontracting of support staff is permitted and would therefore be subject to MWBE goals. However, please understand that the cost of staff hired directly by the grantee is excluded when determining the MWBE goals.

46. **Question:** May more than one organization apply to administer a program jointly?

**Answer:** No. Only one organization can administer the program per region. However, the organization can choose to subcontract the program within the region.

47. **Question:** Should the applicant subcontract with a County Office for Aging who has been providing Ombudsman services, would this applicant be adhering to the purpose/guidelines of this proposal?

**Answer:** Yes.

48. **Question:** Would it be permitted for NCCI to submit its own application and also sign on as a subcontractor on another organization's application?

**Answer:** Yes.

49. **Question:** Part II: Contract Terms Pg. 47, #3 recommends one (1) full time Ombudsman Coordinator for every 2000 LTC beds in a given region. Region 10 has a combination of 4,549 facility beds and 2,321 non facility beds for a total of 6,870. If we follow this recommendation, we should hire approximately 3.5 staff persons in this role. Is this a requirement for receiving this funding?

**Answer:** Having one full time Ombudsman Coordinator for every 2,000 long term care beds is an aspirational goal and not a requirement of funding. However, it is desirable that the applicant/contractor attempt to meet that aspirational goal and demonstrate that in its application.

50. **Question:** Part II: Contract Terms Pg. 47, #12 recommends two staff minimum who must be Certified Ombudsman. Do all program staff need to have this credential? For example, if we hire an office administrative assistant, must that person be certified?

**Answer:** Not all staff have to be certified. The program coordinator(s) and any other staff that will be providing volunteer supervision or working directly with residents and facilities must be certified.

51. **Question:** Where do we place administrative costs of CDR for LTCOP in budget form? Where is the administrative worksheet located in the Grants Gateway? Page 4, Part 7, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph.

**Answer:** The administrative worksheet is the last item under the Expenditure Budget header under the Forms Menu Tap on the Applications main page.

52. **Question:** Is there a set rate of pay per employee for region 12 and region 13?

**Answer:** No.

53. **Question:** What is the payee identification number? Is it the same as the federal tax id number? Page 55, Part 3: Application Cover Page

**Answer:** Yes.

54. **Question:** Is a Job description with explicit experience and qualifications a substitute for Resume for Non-profits that do not currently have the program? Page 14, Part 9.

**Answer:** Yes. However, in accordance with Part II-2 Attachment A-1 Program Specific Terms and Conditions Section V (Program Specific Clauses) #11 of this RFA prior to hiring paid, certified program staff, the contractor must submit the resume(s) of such staff to the NYSLTCOP for approval.

55. **Question:** Is a non-profit able to apply for more than one region?

**Answer:** Yes.

56. **Question:** Is subcontracting allowable for non MWBE or is all the subcontracting reserved for MWBE?

**Answer:** Grantee's can contract with a non-MWBE for one or more services, however, subcontracts in general must be included when determining the discretionary total on which MWBE compliance is calculated.

57. **Question:** In regard to page 56 Part III Budget Summary Attachment B, how do we know how much funds to allocate to Title VII vs LTCOP funds?

**Answer:** There is no need to allocate the funds to separate funding streams. Applicants should budget for the entire funding amount for the particular region(s) for which they are applying. Fiscal staff at NYSOFA will appropriately allocate the funds as necessary.

58. **Question:** Based upon the introduction and background on page one, the Ombudsman Program serviced the population with volunteers. Has NYS ever had a contract for Ombudsman in the past?

**Answer:** Yes, NYS has contracted for Ombudsman Services for several years. In the past, services were essentially provided on a county by county basis. This is the first time that the program is being contracted on a regional level.

59. **Question:** How does this New York State Ombudsman programming interface with the contractors that currently conduct nursing home and other facility investigations and complaints, etc.? Will those contracts be phased out and taken over by this one or will the Ombudsmen be working with those contractors?

**Answer:** The contracts issued as a result of this RFA will replace all existing contracts/agreements.

60. **Question:** Requesting clarification on page 16 item number I, part B "Required Approvals". Would please explain what this means?

**Answer:** That section requires NYSOFA to obtain the approval of the Office of the State Comptroller and the Attorney General for any contract that exceeds \$50,000. That approval process is administered by NYSOFA and is not a concern of the grantee.

61. **Question:** I understand that FTE coordinators are needed per 2000 beds, however, in review of page 40, section P, my question is whether or not this contract could be exclusively filled by consultants and/or subcontracted staff? Could the coordinators be subcontracted?

**Answer:** No. Paid, certified program staff must be employees of the entity awarded the contract through this RFA or employees of an entity awarded a subcontract by such any contract awardee.

62. **Question:** On pages 51 and 52, Attachment D. Are the selections for "Payment Provisions" and "Reporting Provisions" to be based upon the contractors' preference?

**Answer:** No. Attachment D will be completed by NYSOFA fiscal staff and transmitted with the contract for approval. Attachment D is included in the RFA for informational purposes only. Attachment D will be made part of the contract with the successful applicant.

63. **Question:** Will it be possible at some point to receive information about becoming a sub-contractor or consultant for the Master Contractors that are selected? If not, will there be opportunities to consult or subcontract directly for the Ombudsman Program through NYS?

**Answer:** It will up to the selected contractor in each region to determine if they will subcontract the program in the region for which the contractor is selected.

64. **Question:** Are there any required costs that must be included in the budget? Are there any excluded costs that cannot be included in the budget?

**Answer:** No.

65. **Question:** How many meetings per year are Coordinators required to attend in Albany or other out-of-region location beyond the annual Ombudsman Training Conference? How long is the Ombudsman Training Conference?

**Answer:** While the exact number of required meetings is not known at this time. It is not expected that coordinators will have to attend "out of the region" meetings more than two (2) or three (3) times per year. The Ombudsman Training Conference typically lasts three (3) days.

66. **Question:** There is no place on Grants Gateway to upload Attachment B Budget Summary, a required form.

**Answer:** The budget related questions that are part of the application in Grants Gateway will fulfill this requirement. There is no need to upload the Attachment B Budget Summary.

67. **Question:** What is the difference between the Project Liaison and Project Coordinator?

**Answer:** They are one and the same. There is no difference between the two titles.

68. **Question:** Can funds be used to pay for incentives or stipends to volunteers?

**Answer:** Yes, subject to the approval of the NYS Ombudsman and NYSOFA, stipends are allowed

69. **Question:** Can food be purchased for volunteers attending trainings, especially the full-day certification trainings?

**Answer:** Yes.

70. **Question:** Is there a maximum number of pages for the work plan? Is it double spaced or single and what are margins font requirements, if any?

**Answer:** There are no page, spacing or margin limitations on the work plan.

71. **Question:** Part III Page 58- What will be the relationship (if any) with the current contractors? Can part of the Workplan include meeting with them to: identify current Volunteers; review training curriculum; and learning from their past experiences.

**Answer:** Current contractors, subject to their contracts, are required to meet with the new contractors selected through this RFA process for the purpose of transitioning the program to the new contractor.

72. **Question:** Part III Page 58-60- Will NYSOFA provide mandatory subjects to be covered during in services- Are training curriculums to be standardized?

**Answer:** Yes.

73. **Question:** Part III Page 58 Goal 1- Does SOFA expect there to equal focus on Nursing Homes and smaller long term care facilities (i.e. adult homes, family type homes, and enriched housing)?

**Answer:** Yes.