

**State of Washington
Department of Social and Health Services
Behavioral Health Administration
Office of Forensic Mental Health Services**



**Request for Information #1830-683 (Reissued)
Forensic Evaluation Services**

February 2018

In 2017, the Office of Forensic Mental Health Services of the Behavioral Health Administration of the Department of Social and Health Services of the State of Washington (Department) requested information twice (both February and August) from qualified professionals interested in contracting with the Department to perform forensic evaluations of individuals referred to the Department by the courts. The response to our two previous Request for Information (RFI) solicitations was limited. Through this document, the Department is re-issuing its RFI and is requesting similar information, with several important changes. The Department has modified several questions to focus on competency related assessments, provided clarity on timeframes for report completion, and added a new question (question 11). Persons who responded to the initial RFI should reapply and resubmit responses to have an opportunity to clarify reimbursement requirements and to address the longer amount of time to complete reports. For those individuals who would be resubmitting, the Department appreciates your time and apologize for the inconvenience. The Department also wishes to clarify that its needs are limited to professionals with experience in performing forensic evaluations of criminal defendants and to encourage professionals who are developing this skill set to inquire about opportunities with the Department in the future.

After receiving information in response to this RFI, the Department may elect to enter into contracts for the performance of forensic evaluations.

Background

The Department is responsible for the provision of certain forensic mental health services ordered by a court, pursuant to RCW 10.77, with respect to individuals who are charged with a crime within the State of Washington. One type of forensic mental health service consists of the evaluation of an individual's competency to stand trial, referred to in this document as a "forensic evaluation." Another type of forensic mental health service consists of treatment which attempts to restore the competency of an individual who has been found incompetent to stand trial, referred to in this document as "competency restoration." Forensic evaluations are presently provided in jail facilities, the state hospitals, and in the community. In the main, these forensic services are provided by Department personnel. Complementing the work of Department personnel, some in-jail forensic evaluations are presently performed by professionals whose services are arranged by counties and reimbursed by the Department ("panel evaluations"). Competency restoration services are presently provided in the state hospitals and in two temporary residential treatment facilities contracted by the Department.

In recent years, the Department has experienced increasing demand for its forensic evaluation and competency restoration services and has been ordered to provide each of these types of services within short turnaround times imposed under statutory provisions and court orders. The

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Department and its many community partners have made significant efforts to expand and improve the delivery of forensic mental health services.

In furtherance of these efforts, the Office of Forensic Mental Health Services (OFMHS) was established within the Department in 2015. The OFMHS has responsibility for the organization and oversight of forensic mental health services within the State of Washington. In addition to operationalizing alternative sites for the provision of competency restoration services outside the state hospitals, the OFMHS has initiated diversion programs, improved data collection and tracking, increased the number of forensic evaluators employed by the Department and implemented training activities to improve the quality of forensic evaluations.

Forensic Evaluation Service Goals

The goal of contracting forensic evaluation services is to expand capacity to help ensure that forensic evaluations are completed, and reports are provided to the courts, within fourteen (14) days following the entry of a court order referring a detainee for evaluation. Despite the expansion of the Department's team of employed forensic evaluators, the Department is still not fully able to meet the required timeline for every person ordered by the court to receive a jail-based evaluation. Contracted evaluators may be interested in supplementing their existing practices to assist the Department, may be available to expand the availability of services during off hours and weekends, or may be situated in geographic regions that are not as frequently and conveniently served by Department forensic evaluators.

Most forensic evaluations are performed within jail facilities, but some evaluations may be performed in a professional office/community setting. Depending upon its needs and the qualifications and availability of respondents, the Department may elect to contract with multiple professionals to provide forensic evaluations within the time frames and geographic areas where the Department has service needs. Any contracts entered into by the Department would be subject to the needs of the Department and to the availability of the Contractor, as evidenced by the acceptance of a referral.

Minimum Respondent Qualifications

The Department is seeking information from professionals who are either:

1. A psychiatrist licensed as a physician and surgeon in the State of Washington who has, in addition, completed three years of graduate training in psychiatry in a program approved by the American Medical Association or the American Osteopathic Association and is certified or eligible to be certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology or the American Osteopathic Board of Neurology and Psychiatry;
2. A psychologist licensed as a psychologist pursuant to chapter [18.83 RCW](#); or
3. A social worker with a master's or further advanced degree from a social work educational program accredited and approved as provided in RCW [18.320.010](#).

In addition, respondents should meet the following minimum experience/training/certification requirements: experience performing competency evaluations of criminal defendants; knowledge of competency statutes; psychological testing knowledge; excellent clinical assessment and diagnostic skills; strong report writing skills; and, satisfactory criminal background check results.

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Persons who fall within one of the above categories and who do not meet the minimum experience, training and certification requirements set forth above should not respond to this Request for Information, since they cannot be considered at this time. The Department will consider respondents interested in providing in-person evaluations and/or who provide services using telehealth technology.

Request for Information Goals and Process

Your response to this RFI is important to the Department and is greatly appreciated.

This Request for Information is not a competitive solicitation that will result in the award of one or more contracts. Rather, it is intended to obtain information that may assist the Department in determining its contractual options, should the Department elect to contract directly with multiple professionals who may have requisite qualifications and varying geographic and time availability. Participation in this RFI is voluntary and responses are not considered proposals. This document does not obligate the Department to evaluate the services of any respondent or to negotiate or enter into any contracts. The Department reserves the right to explore any and all options for meeting its service needs including, but not limited to, options that are brought to its attention through this RFI. The Department shall not be responsible for any cost that may be incurred by persons responding to this RFI.

Notice of this RFI is being sent to known potential contractors and will be published on the [Department's website](#) as well as on [Washington's Electronic Business Solution](#) (WEBS), the procurement website hosted by the State [Department of Enterprise Services](#) (DES). The Department reserves the right to utilize freely any ideas and information received as a result of this RFI in planning and developing potential solutions to the Department's Service requirements.

Questions and Answers about this RFI

Questions regarding this RFI may be directed via e-mail or regular mail to the RFI Coordinator listed below. Please provide your questions in writing, rather than verbally, and include the words **RFI # 1830-***** in the subject line. Questions will be accepted through April 1, 2018. To the extent possible, answers will be consolidated and answered in an Amendment to this RFI that is posted on the Department's website and on WEBS on or about April 16, 2018. The following is a link to the web page on the Department's website where documents relating to this RFI will be posted: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/fsa/central-contract-services/procurements-and-contracting>

How to Respond to this RFI

If you are interested in providing information in response to this RFI, please submit a letter of interest together with a completed questionnaire. The questionnaire is appended to this RFI as Attachment 1. **Please submit your response so that it is received no later than April 30, 2018.** **Emailed responses are preferred.** You may email your response, deliver it or send it via regular mail to:

Dr. Thomas Kinlen, Director
Office of Forensic Mental Health Services
Behavioral Health Administration
Washington State Department of Social and Health Services
4500 10th Avenue S.E., Lacey, WA 98503 (for Responses that are delivered)
P.O. Box 45050, Olympia, WA 98504-5050 (for Responses that are mailed)
Kinletj@dshs.wa.gov (for Responses that are emailed)

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Confidentiality

The Department of Social and Health Services is subject to public records laws and cannot guarantee the confidentiality of responses. Therefore, **submission of information considered confidential and proprietary by respondents is strongly discouraged.** Respondents who consider any information that is requested on Attachment 1 to be confidential and proprietary should **refrain from providing this information and note the concern.** The Department may require additional information at a later time, if it considers the respondent for a contract, and appreciates receipt of any information that it can use to identify potential contractors. If the Department receives a request to view or copy any response to this RFI, it will respond according to applicable law and policy governing public disclosure. Please assume that your response will be made available for public disclosure.

Timeline and Next Steps

Following a review of the responses it receives, the Department may choose to interview one or more professionals, may request additional information from some or all respondents, and may enter into one or more contracts beginning in or after Summer 2018.

Thank you for your assistance and participation in this Request for Information.

RFI 1830-683
Attachment 1
Respondent Questionnaire

Reminder: upon submission to the Department of Social and Health Services, your response to this Questionnaire will be deemed a public record. If you consider any particular information to be confidential or proprietary, please refrain from including such information in your response and note this concern. Your response may be disclosed to the public if a public record request is requested by DSHS. **Please repeat the applicable number and question above your response to each question.**

1. Your name, employer or self-employment status, business address(es), business phone number, fax number and e-mail address.
2. Please list your educational degrees, licensure, year of initial license(s) and certifications held.
3. Please list any special training you have taken in the area of forensic evaluation services, specifically competency to stand trial assessments.
4. Please briefly describe your experience in providing forensic evaluation services.
5. Please identify the approximate number of forensic evaluations you have performed during the past five (5) years and indicate the approximate percentage of evaluations that were performed for defendants charged with a misdemeanor and defendants charged with a felony.
6. Please list the counties within which you would be willing to perform forensic evaluations for the Department, if contracted. If you propose to provide evaluations using telehealth technology, please indicate whether you would therefore be willing to perform evaluations in all Washington counties.
7. Please list the number of evaluations you would be willing to perform annually if contracted by the Department.
8. Please indicate the days of the week and hours of the day or evening during which you would be willing to perform evaluations.
9. Please indicate whether you would be willing and available to provide, within the above counties:

- (a) an in-jail forensic evaluation for an individual who is charged with a misdemeanor
- (b) an in-jail forensic evaluation for an individual who is charged with a felony
- (c) a community-based forensic evaluation for an individual who is charged with a misdemeanor
- (d) a community-based forensic evaluation for an individual who is charged with a felony
- (e) an evaluation using telehealth technology.

10. Please indicate whether you can commit to performing an evaluation and submitting a completed report within the following timeframes:

Type of Evaluation	Length of Time (to completed report)
Jail-based evaluation	21 days from entry of the court order, or 14 days from receipt of the court order, whichever is shorter
PR (Personal Recognizance; community) based evaluation	Target of 21 days from entry of the court order

11. To follow-up on question 10, once you have received a referral from the Department, how many days will it take you, in most cases, to perform all the necessary tasks (reviewing the referral, reviewing of records, scheduling, completing the interview, testing, and writing and filing the report, etcetera) to submit a final report?

12. Please indicate what factors, if any, may affect your willingness or ability to accept an evaluation referral. Additionally, are there particular time periods when you are less available?

13. The department is reviewing the current pay structure for consideration of new rates and would like you to provide costs to complete a typical competency evaluation

14. Please indicate whether you would be willing to participate, without charge to the Department, in Department-sponsored training or educational programs on topics relevant to forensic evaluations, if offered at no cost to you.

15. Please indicate whether you have any suggestions that will help the Department in expanding its capacity to perform forensic evaluations, specifically competency to stand trial assessments, within the State of Washington.

16. Please indicate any circumstances, terms or resources that would make you more likely to participate as a contractor providing forensic evaluations for the Department?