



State of Louisiana

Division of Administration
TANF Executive Office of Oversight and Evaluation

TANF Initiatives

Required Elements for Initiative Proposals for Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Development

Updated March 2003

As a recipient of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds, you are expected to develop a proposal to articulate how you intend to deliver services in accordance with the provisions set forth in HB 1 of the proposed budget. This information will assist you in planning activities throughout the contract year. Completion of this plan will also enable you to work closely with the TANF Office of Oversight and Evaluation in the event your program implementation needs enhancement to ensure you are successful in providing quality services. You have probably addressed many of these issues during your past-year of operation. If not, this will be a prime opportunity for you to do so.

The following elements are the necessary components for the proposal you will submit to the Division of Administration regarding your implementation plans for your assigned TANF Initiative. These elements will be included in your Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the coming year. You must receive approval of this proposal prior to the signing of your MOU.

- **Program Description**—This is the quick, abstract description of the service you are providing, the details of how this will occur should be described in the scope of work. To get you started, you can use something like this:

The purpose of the (Name your TANF Initiative) is to provide (describe your service) to (identify the number served and describe who you are serving) so that **or** in order to (identify the anticipated outcome[s] of providing the service or deliverable) .
or so they can (describe how customers will benefit from receipt of service or deliverable) .

Now, you'll want to fill in the details of how this will be accomplished within the scope of work section.

- **Statement of Work**—What is the overall goal and objective of your initiative? What are the proposed outcomes for this initiative and how will you ensure that service delivery meets the stated goal of your initiative? What services do you intend to provide, who will you provide services to, how many will you serve, where will service-delivery take place, what is the geographic area served by your initiative, who will be your service provider? Provide a description of the selection, criteria, and process for distribution of funds to contractors.

If you received less money this year, you'll want to describe ways in which this has affected or changed your overall initiative. You'll want to update your statement of work to include a revised plan on how you will implement your initiative for the FY03-04 year.

- **Eligibility and Verification**—who is eligible for your service and how will you verify that they are eligible? What process and documentation will you (through your subcontractors) use to determine eligibility?
- **Budget**—How do you plan on using your allocation? What will you allocate for service delivery (your contractors) any administrative cost (cost to your agency for monitoring activities, applicable audits, etc) associate with your initiative? What will be the unit cost associated with your initiative, how many units do you expect to produce? What types of budgets will you expect from your contractors, what types of things will you allow for expenditures?

- **Recruitment**—how will you successfully attract potential participants to your initiative? Are these strategies consistent with the needs and practices of the target population? What will be your back-up plan if initial strategies prove unsuccessful? How will you ensure your contractors utilize these approaches?
- **Marketing**—How will you advertise the availability of your service to potential participants? You should think of multiple approaches such as traditional media (print, television, radio, etc) and non-traditional approaches such as outreach to churches, flyers in places where your target populations frequent etc. You should take into consideration any special needs of rural communities or areas of high poverty where traditional approaches—like press releases—may be ineffective.
- **Performance Measures**—What are those things you will track from the beginning to see if your program is successful? What steps will you take to ensure that your contractors understand the measures to be captured? What instruments will you use to obtain this information from contractors? What short-term (monthly) and long-term outcome measures will be tracked in order to determine the effectiveness of the program? Outcome measures should be specific, quantifiable in numbers, and directly related to the activities of the program. Performance measures should be incorporated into your subcontracts and communicated at or prior to your contract negotiations.

Be SMART:

Specific
Measurable
Aggressive but Attainable
Results-oriented
Time-bound

- **Monitoring Your Progress**—How will you determine if you are on-track in meeting your goals and objectives? How often will you require your contractors to report to you? What types of things will they report? Who will have responsibility for monitoring the performance of these contractors? Will you contract out for this? How frequently will a monitor visit your contractors, what will you look for during this visits? How will you communicate poor performance or needed areas of improvement to your contractors? What type of corrective action will you develop? How will you ensure fiscal accountability?
- **Implementation plan and timeline**—What will be your timeline for implementing your initiative, including any overlap of current year initiatives that may need to be completed before you start a new year. When will service delivery begin? How will you ensure that services are delivered as soon as possible? How will your planning accommodate the September 30th deadline to receive your final program year reimbursement from DSS? Have you built in enough time to have all your RFP's, contracts and MOU's reviewed and approved by DOA? Have you built in enough time to ensure all your contracts are IN PLACE by September 30th (this means your contract gets to contract review prior to September 30th)?
- **Data Collection**—Describe your general process to collect critical program data. Describe any enhancements that have been made to your data collection process in the past year. How do you collect data from your contractors and what assurances do you have that this data is accurate? Are you confident that your current data collection process is adequate to measure and document your performance? Do you need to use a portion of your allocation to make improvements in this area? Have you considered necessary changes to your data collection efforts to accommodate new/revised performance measures? Are you proposing to add new program outcomes for the next year? If so, what changes, if any, are needed in your data collection process to measure progress toward achievement of these outcomes?