

# Help Me Grow Request for Proposal #2023-01

**Issued: January 9, 2023**

**Responses due: February 24, 2023, 5:00 PM PST**

**Deadline for Submitting a Letter of Intent: January 23, 2023, 5pm PST**

## **Mandatory Proposers' Conference**

A Mandatory Proposers' Conference will be held:

**Wednesday, January 25, 2023**

**1:30 PM – 3:00 PM PST**

**Via Zoom meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81176289966?pwd=Y2xSOUwrNk9pdFpBQ09KUnpad2JLdz09>

[Meeting ID: 811 7628 9966](#)

[Passcode: 237880](#)

[One tap mobile](#)

[+16699006833,,81176289966#,,, \\*237880# US \(San Jose\)](tel:+16699006833,,81176289966#,,, *237880# US (San Jose))

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		<b>RFP COORDINATOR:</b>
		<b>Juanita Morales, Program Manager</b> <a href="mailto:jsmorales@solanocounty.com">jsmorales@solanocounty.com</a>
		Written questions regarding this RFP may be submitted to the RFP Coordinator no later than January 23, 2023 5:00pm PST.
<b>Attachment A: Proposal Form</b>		
<b>Attachment B: Service Counts/Budget Form</b>		
<b>Attachment C: Solano County Standard Agreement</b>		

**1 SCOPE OF SERVICES**

**1.1 Background/Overview**

First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission and the Department of Health and Social Services Mental Health Division (together, “County”) are seeking services to continue the Help Me Grow model in Solano County. The Help Me Grow system has been operating in Solano County since 2014 and successfully connects families to the resources they need.

Help Me Grow (HMG) Solano, an evidence-based program, provides a centralized access point (centralized call line) to connect young children and families to community-based services. Family navigators provide education and support to families, referrals to resources, and follow up to ensure linkages are successful. The Help Me Grow Solano program also provides developmental screenings for children to ensure optimal development.

Help Me Grow Solano is an affiliate of Help Me Grow California, which is an affiliate of Help Me Grow National. As such, this program has ongoing reporting requirements to ensure it is operating with fidelity to the model of service delivery.

**1.2 Our Commitment to Equity and Inclusion**

First 5 Solano serves one of the most diverse counties in the United States. Our mission, vision and values are deeply rooted in: Equity, Accessibility, Sustainability, Advocacy, Collaboration and Respect. We aim to create an equitable and inclusive culture that fosters acceptance and respect for diversity. We seek to deepen understanding and knowledge among children, families, staff, and community partners of diverse backgrounds, cultivate empathy and collaboration, and promote the well-being of our staff, partners and the communities we serve. First 5 Solano celebrates and is enriched by the diversity of our whole community.

**1.3 Scope of Services**

The National Help Me Grow (HMG) Model is a proven, efficient and effective system that assists counties in identifying children from birth through age 8 at risk for developmental or behavioral challenges and connecting families to community-based programs and services. In Solano County HMG focuses on children ages 0-5.

HMG Solano connects families with young children to community-based services and support. Through the HMG system, statewide partners and communities are prepared to build collaboration across service sectors, including child health care, early care and education and family support. In addition, HMG Solano provides developmental and behavioral screenings for early identification and referrals to intervention services.

The success of HMG is built on four core components and three structural requirements:

Core Components:

1. Child health care provider outreach- Conduct targeted outreach to child healthcare providers and establish partnerships to support early detection and early intervention.
2. Family and community outreach – Engage children, families and partners by participating in community outreach events and conduct targeted outreach to community.

3. Centralized telephone access point – Provide customer service to support the Help Me Grow (HMG) system by staffing a centralized access call line/web portal and triage and assign referrals for family needs that come in through the centralized access point
4. Data collection and analysis - Collect and report all HMG data to First 5 Solano and HMG CA per HMG California requirements; analyze data, identify gaps, and recommend system improvements.

Structural Requirements:

1. An organizing entity – The organizing entity provides an administrative “home” for HMG. This entity facilitates the planning and implementation of the HMG system, along with administrative and fiscal oversight.
2. A strategy for expanding – A countywide system will have a greater ability to address gaps and barriers, which will help build an effective early childhood system that serves all children in the county.
3. The implementation of a continuous quality improvement plan– CQI is the process that enables adherence to the Help Me Grow core components, while supporting teams in successful system implementation. It allows us to implement the model with fidelity, while allowing for local flexibility.

The HMG philosophy and model also align well with the Strengthening Families approach and protective factors framework.

- **Parental Resilience:** HMG Solano fosters parental resilience and strengthens families by meeting them where they are and partnering with them in identifying and prioritizing issues. Families are helped to recognize early signs of developmental/behavioral risks and to successfully find needed programs and services. Parents become better equipped to respond effectively to family crisis situations.
- **Social Connections:** Through HMG Solano care coordination, families are linked to a wide range of formal and informal services and supports such as family events, children’s play groups, parent/family networks and educational programs. These experiences all help to facilitate mutual support, friendships and partnerships.
- **Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development:** HMG Solano supports families as their children’s first teachers, observers and advocates for optimal healthy development. Through a variety of informational materials and community resources, families acquire knowledge and skills related to child development, behaviors and developmental milestones. Families are further assisted in using observational tools and effective parenting strategies to best support their children.
- **Concrete Support in Times of Need:** The HMG Solano system connects families to services, programs and opportunities where they live. HMG Solano Family Navigators build relationships with families, helping them understand available resources, how to access them, specific questions to ask and, if needed, assistance with completing service application packages. HMG Solano further acts as a care coordination service for child health care, early care and education and family support providers, therefore promoting an ongoing cycle of concrete support.
- **Social and Emotional Competence of Children:** HMG Solano care coordination and service referrals are provided for children and families at every level of need: developmental, behavioral or social-emotional challenges, Birth to Three, Title V, special health care needs and special education. By linking families to community-based programs such as child care, Head Start and

family resource centers, HMG Solano supports positive early learning and peer socialization experiences that strengthen children’s social-emotional abilities, school readiness and school success.

#### **1.4 Program Duration**

A contract that results from this RFP may be awarded for three (3) years or thirty-six (36) months (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2026 or FY2023/24 – FY2025/26). Contracts may be extended for two (2) additional years, FY2026/27 - FY2027/28 dependent on success of the agency providing the services, demonstrated need in the community, and availability of funds.

#### **1.5 Funding Availability**

Funding is available through this RFP in the amount of \$1,140,000 (\$380,000 per year for 3 years) beginning in FY2023/24 for operation of the Help Me Grow Solano program countywide. First 5 Solano and Mental Health Services Act share funding in this RFP for Help Me Grow Solano Services across all years of the contract. Contracts resulting from this RFP will be based on availability of funding from both First 5 Solano and Mental Health Services Act.

#### **1.6 Reporting Requirements**

Any contract issued as a result of this RFP will be required to submit monthly aggregate data and quarterly reports on the progress of the program. In addition, this contractor will be required to submit data on no more than a quarterly basis to fulfill HMG CA and HMG National requirements.

## 2 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS PROCESS

### 2.1 Eligible Proposers

“Proposer” is any individual or entity that submits a Proposal in response to this RFP. Non-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, and government entities are eligible to submit a proposal.

### 2.2 Mandatory Letter of Intent

Potential Proposers submit a Letter of Intent indicating that they intend to apply to this solicitation for funding. Letters of intent must include the agency name, contact person, email address and a statement of intent to apply for this funding. Letters of Intent must be submitted by January 23, 2023 by 5:00PM to [jsmorales@solanocounty.com](mailto:jsmorales@solanocounty.com). Applicants who submit the Letter of Intent will be sent the Zoom Link to the Mandatory Bidders Conference the next day.

Should only one letter of intent be received by the due date, the county reserves the right to move directly into contract negotiations with the sole applicant.

### 2.3 Mandatory Proposers’ Conference

**Potential Proposers must attend a Mandatory Proposers’ Conference on Wednesday, January 25, 2023 from 1:30pm to 3:00pm via Zoom Conference**

The purpose of the conference is to provide an opportunity for potential Proposers to ask specific questions about the project and to request RFP clarification. Potential Proposers may submit questions in writing before or during the conference (see 2.5 below). The County will consider verbal questions asked at the conference, but responses may be deferred and provided at a later date. Subcontractors may not represent a potential Proposer at the conference. The County will not accept any proposal from Proposers that do not attend the conference.

### 2.4 RFP Inquiries and Requests for Information

Inquiries regarding the RFP may be made by email prior to the Mandatory Proposers’ Conference or may also be made at the Mandatory Proposers’ Conference. Inquiries made outside of the Mandatory Proposers’ Conference must be made by email to the RFP Coordinator at [jsmorales@solanocounty.com](mailto:jsmorales@solanocounty.com) with the Subject line: **RFP #2023-01**.

**All emailed inquiries must be received by January 23, 2023, 5:00pm PST.** Emailed inquiries will be addressed along with all other inquiries at the Mandatory Proposers Conference on January 25, 2023. The County will provide written responses by January 27, 2023 to these inquiries to each individual/agency in attendance at the Mandatory Proposers’ Conference via email and on the First 5 Solano website ([www.first5solano.org](http://www.first5solano.org)).

### 2.5 Schedule of RFP Events

The following Schedule of Events reflects important dates for the selection process; however, the County reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to adjust this schedule as it deems necessary. Notification of any adjustment to the Schedule of Events will be posted on the First 5 Solano website/Funding Opportunities (see link below). Proposers are responsible to view the website continually for any revisions. [www.first5solano.org](http://www.first5solano.org)

EVENT		DATE
1	County Issues RFP Packet	January 9, 2023
2	Deadline for Submitting Written Questions to RFP Coordinator at <a href="mailto:jsmorales@solanocounty.com">jsmorales@solanocounty.com</a>	January 23, 2023, 5pm PST
3	<b>Deadline for Submitting a Letter of Intent</b>	January 23, 2023, 5pm PST
4	<b>Mandatory Proposer Conference</b> Zoom Conference Call <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81176289966?pwd=Y2xSOUwrNk9pdFpBQ09KUUnpad2JLdz09">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81176289966?pwd=Y2xSOUwrNk9pdFpBQ09KUUnpad2JLdz09</a> <b>Meeting ID: 811 7628 9966</b>	<b>January 25, 2023</b> <b>1:30-3:00 PM PST</b>
5	Written Responses to RFP inquiries issued	January 27, 2023
6	<b>Deadline for Submitting a Proposal:</b> First 5 Solano Via email: <a href="mailto:cfcsolano@solanocounty.com">cfcsolano@solanocounty.com</a> with subject line: <b>RFP #2023-01 Proposal</b>	<b>February 24, 2023, 5pm PST</b> <b>Late submittals will not be accepted.</b>
7	Notification of Intent to Recommend Funding	April 12, 2023
8	First 5 Solano Commission Approves Awards of Funding	April 19, 2023
9	Contract Development & Negotiations Period	April 20-May 29, 2023
10	Completed Contract Signed by Contractor	June 5, 2023
11	<b>Services Begin</b>	<b>July 1, 2023</b>

**2.6 Proposal Submittal and Withdrawal**

Proposer must fully complete the Proposal in the format required by the County and respond to every question.

Email the Proposal to: [cfcsolano@solanocounty.com](mailto:cfcsolano@solanocounty.com) with subject line: **RFP #2023-01 Proposal**

Page 2 of proposal must be “wet-signed” and scanned or signed digitally using an eSignature program, such as AdobeSign.

**Proposals must be received no later than the Proposal Deadline time of 5:00 PM February 24, 2023 as detailed in Schedule of Events in order to be considered.** The County assumes no responsibility for delays caused by any delivery service.

The County will not pay any costs associated with the preparation, submittal, or presentation of any Proposal. To withdraw a Proposal, the Proposer must submit a written request, signed by an authorized representative, to First 5 Solano. After withdrawing a previously submitted Proposal, the Proposer may submit another Proposal at any time up to the deadline for submitting Proposals. Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

## 3 INSTRUCTIONS TO PROPOSERS

### 3.1 Mandatory Proposal Form

The County has provided a Proposal Form (Attachment A) and Service Counts/Budget Form (Attachment B) in an electronic format on First 5 Solano's website ([www.first5solano.org](http://www.first5solano.org)). Proposers must fully complete and sign the Proposal Form and Service Counts/Budget Form, responding to every question, and attach all necessary requested documents. Proposers must fill in desired check boxes and adhere to page limits where indicated.

Failure to follow the specified Proposal Form and format may, at the County's sole discretion, result in the rejection of the Proposal.

### 3.2 Proposal Format

All proposers must follow additional formats set forth herein:

- Arial font size 11
- All Proposal pages (with attachments labeled individually)
- All responses, as well as any reference material presented, written in English, adhering to character limits where applicable
- All monetary amounts detailed in United States currency and rounded to the nearest whole dollar

### 3.3 Signatures and Proposal Submittal

Application must be "wet-signed" (in blue ink) and scanned or signed digitally using an eSignature program, such as AdobeSign.

**4 EVALUATION, SELECTION AND AWARD PROCESS**

**4.1 Compliance**

The County will review all Proposals to determine compliance with basic Proposal requirements as specified in this Proposal. Incomplete Proposals may disqualify the Proposer from further consideration in this process.

**4.2 Evaluation Process**

The evaluation process is designed to recommend award(s) of funding to the Proposer(s) that can best provide Help Me Grow Solano services in Solano County. Proposals will be evaluated as set forth below.

A First 5 Solano Evaluation Committee (EC) will evaluate all Proposals. The EC will be composed of First 5 Solano staff and other parties that may have relevant expertise or experience. The EC will score and recommend proposals in accordance with the evaluation criteria set forth in this RFP. Evaluation of the proposals shall be within the sole judgment and discretion of the EC.

A maximum number of points will be assigned to each Proposal Element (Qualifications and Experience, Scope of Work/Program Description and Budget) in the Proposal Packet as follows:

Proposal Elements	Maximum Score
Program Description	40 Points
Qualifications and Experience	40 Points
Service Counts/Budget	20 Points
<b>Total Maximum</b>	<b>100 Points</b>

**4.3 Proposal Review Criteria**

Item	Possible Points	Points Total
<b>Program Description</b>		<b>40</b>
Proposer clearly articulates the services that they are proposing to provide, including levels of service, target population, geographic location, language, and location of service delivery, as appropriate.	<b>15</b>	
Proposer describes how Help Me Grow services will integrate with other services at their agency and within the community.	<b>15</b>	
Proposer has an outreach plan consistent with engaging and retaining families.	<b>10</b>	
<b>Qualifications and Experience</b>		<b>40</b>
Proposer clearly articulates the capacity of the organization to accomplish the proposed services	<b>15</b>	
Proposer’s past accomplishments or current projects/efforts relate to the type of work required under this RFP and proposer demonstrates understanding of how to complete the work.	<b>15</b>	
Proposer has sufficient staff and/or contracted staff to carry out the project. Staff have sufficient levels of education, qualifications and experience to carry out the project.	<b>10</b>	



<b>Service Counts/Budget</b>		<b>20</b>
Level of staffing is consistent with amount of services (service counts) to be delivered.	<b>10</b>	
Amount and line items in the budget are appropriate for amount of services (service counts) to be delivered.	<b>10</b>	
<b>Total Possible Points</b>		<b>100</b>

Final selection is at the sole discretion of the County or its designee, which reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals, or to make no selection based on this RFP.

**4.4 Best Value**

First 5 Solano will select the proposal(s) that presents the best value and is most advantageous to the County and the public. Accordingly, First 5 Solano may not necessarily award the proposer with the lowest price proposal if doing so would not be in the overall best interest of First 5 Solano. First 5 Solano reserves the right to expand or reduce the proposed scope of work during the contracting process based on budget constraints and to award to a single or multiple proposers.

## 5 CONTRACT INFORMATION

### 5.1 Contract Qualifications

Complete a statement of acknowledgment (Attachment A-Proposal form, page 1) that the Proposer has reviewed the Proposed Solano County Standard Contract (Attachment C) and has accepted it with or without qualification. If the Proposer makes qualifications, those qualifications must be identified and listed along with suggested modifications to the contract. (Note: Contract Exhibits A and B - the scope of work and budget - will be finalized during the contracting process.) If the Proposer makes no qualifications to the Standard Contract, including its exhibits, then it shall be deemed that the Proposer accepts these items without reservation or any qualifications.

### 5.2 Contract Term/Duration

A contract that results from this RFP may be awarded for thirty-six (36) months (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2026). Contracts may be extended for two additional years through FY2027/28 dependent on success of the agency providing the services, demonstrated need in the community, and availability of funds.

**Note:** The timeframe above is estimated. The award of funds does not authorize work to begin. Contracts must be fully executed before services can begin. In addition, services cannot begin prior to the contracted start date.

### 5.3 Funding and Payment Structure

As described in Section 1.5, First 5 Solano and Mental Health Services Act share funding in this RFP for Help Me Grow Solano Services across all years of the contract. Contracts resulting from this RFP will be based on availability of funding from both First 5 Solano and Mental Health Services Act based on the set amount outlined in Section 1.5.

### 5.4 Contract Award Process

- A. After the evaluation of proposals and final consideration of all pertinent information available, First 5 Solano will either reject all proposals or issue a written notice of intent to recommend funding to the First 5 Solano Commission of the apparent best evaluated proposals. The notice shall not create rights, interests, or claims of entitlement in the apparent best evaluated proposers. The First 5 Solano Commission shall consider approval of the recommendations at their next regularly scheduled meeting.
- B. This RFP, its attachments, submitted questions and their answers, and the proposals from the best evaluated proposers shall be incorporated into the final contract.
- C. The apparent best evaluated proposers should be prepared to enter into a contract with First 5 Solano which shall be substantially the same as the Standard Contract included in Attachment C to this RFP. Notwithstanding, First 5 Solano reserves the right to add terms and conditions, deemed to be in the best interest of First 5 Solano, during final contract negotiations.
- D. Contracts must be fully executed before services can begin. Services cannot begin prior to the contracted start date.
- E. If a proposer fails to sign and return the contract drawn pursuant to this RFP and final contract negotiations within 14 days of its delivery to the proposer, First 5 Solano may cancel the award and award the contract to the next best evaluated proposer.

## **6 TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### **6.1 Protests and Appeals**

Any actual Proposer who believes that the process was not conducted per the instructions provided in this RFP and wishes to protest the notice of recommendation for funding may submit a protest in writing to the Executive Director of First 5 Solano within 7 calendar days after such Proposer knows or should have known of the facts giving rise to the protest, but in no event later than 7 calendar days after the date of the notice of recommendation for funding. All letters of protest shall clearly identify the reasons and basis for the protest. The protest must also state the law, rule, regulation, or policy upon which the protest is based. The Executive Director of First 5 Solano will issue a written decision within 10 working days after receipt of the protest which shall include the reason for the action taken and the process for appealing the decision.

### **6.2 County Purchasing Policy**

The County's Purchasing & Contracting Policy Manual, found [here](#) and is fully incorporated into and made a part of this RFP by this reference and governs this RFP.

### **6.3 RFP Amendment, Cancellation and Right of Rejection.**

- A. First 5 Solano reserves the unilateral right to amend this RFP in writing at any time by posting the amendment on the First 5 Solano website. Proposers are responsible to view the website periodically for any amendments to the RFP. Proposers shall respond to the final written RFP and any exhibits, attachments, and amendments. Proposer shall include a signed acknowledgement of any amendments to the RFP in their proposal.
- B. First 5 Solano also reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any and all Proposals or to cancel or reissue the RFP.
- C. First 5 Solano reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to waive variances in Proposals provided such action is in the best interest of First 5 Solano. Where First 5 Solano waives minor variances in Proposals, such waiver does not modify the RFP requirements or excuse the Proposer from full compliance with the RFP. Notwithstanding any minor variance, First 5 Solano may hold any Proposal to strict compliance with the RFP.

### **6.4 Confidentiality**

First 5 Solano will retain a master copy of each response to this RFP, which responses will become a public record after the award of a contract unless the qualifications or specific parts of the qualifications can be shown to be exempt by law under Government Code section 6250 et seq. Proposers may clearly label part of a submittal as "CONFIDENTIAL" if the Proposer agrees to indemnify and defend the County for honoring such a designation. The failure to have so labeled any information shall constitute a complete waiver of all claims for damages caused by any release of the information. If a public records request for labeled information is received by the County, the County will notify the proposer of the request and delay access to the material until 7 working days after notification to the proposer. Within that time delay, it will be the proposer's duty to act in protection of its labeled information. Failure to so act shall constitute a complete waiver.

### **6.5 Reservation of Rights**

- A. First 5 Solano reserves the right to reject any and all bids, or to cancel this RFP in part or in its entirety.

- B. First 5 Solano reserves the right to waive any variances in proposals provided such action is in the best interest of First 5 Solano.
- C. First 5 Solano reserves the right to amend this RFP at any time. First 5 Solano also reserves the right to cancel or reissue the RFP at its sole discretion.
- D. Any bid received which does not meet the requirements of this RFP, may be considered to be non-responsive, and may be rejected. First 5 Solano may reject any bid that does not comply with all of the terms, conditions, and performance requirements of this RFP.
- E. First 5 Solano reserves the right to cancel any award and re-solicit bids for services herein specified due to the increased or added costs, if in its opinion increased prices are greater than those of the general market.
- F. First 5 Solano reserves the right to cancel any award and re-solicit bids in the event services cannot commence with ten (10) days after the specified date for start of work.
- G. First 5 Solano reserves the right to reject any and all proposals considered not to be in the best interest of First 5 Solano.
- H. First 5 Solano reserves the right to waive any and all minor irregularities in bids.
- I. First 5 Solano reserves the right to reduce or increase any specification, in whole or in part due to budget constraints.

END OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS