



## Board Report

File #: 2021-0503, File Type: Contract

Agenda Number: 33.

### EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE SEPTEMBER 16, 2021

**SUBJECT: METRO EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**ACTION: APPROVE CONTRACT AWARD**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer to award a five-year, firm fixed unit rate Contract No. PS186372000 to ComPsych Corporation to provide a comprehensive Employee Assistance Program in an amount not-to-exceed \$531,103 for the three-year base term, plus \$187,761 for the first option year, and \$193,394 for the second option year, for a combined not-to-exceed amount of \$912,258, inclusive of two, one-year options effective November 1, 2021 subject to resolution of protest(s), if any.

#### **ISSUE**

The existing contract for Employee Assistance Program will expire on October 31, 2021. To ensure continuity of service, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic, a new contract award is required effective November 1, 2021.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Metro Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a service that provides personal counseling benefits to Metro employees, including part-time, and temporary employees and their immediate family members. The program aims to promote job effectiveness and productivity by helping employees and their immediate family members cope with challenges on the job and in the home.

Services provided include crisis management counseling for traumatic events, including immediate intervention following serious bus and rail accidents, and other tragic events, confidential counseling, child, and elder care referrals, as well as legal and financial guidance.

Metro and its predecessor agencies have continuously provided EAP since 1981. The EAP contract is currently managed by the Helping Employee Access Resources (H.E.A.R.) Office under the Human Capital & Development department.

## **DISCUSSION**

In accordance with HR 40, the Employee Assistance Program policy, Metro is committed to maintain a safe and healthy work environment for its employees and provide support to employees who experience personal or work-related challenges, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic. The EAP is designed to identify and assist employees in recognizing and resolving personal challenges that may be adversely affecting their performance at work, such as marital, financial, emotional problems, family issues, or substance or alcohol abuse. The program offers a friendly, accessible, and confidential platform wherein licensed professionals identify stressors, explore behavioral changes, and provide support and resources that enable the employee to solve personal problems.

EAP also serves as a resource to managers in dealing with employees experiencing personal problems affecting job performance, conduct and reliability. EAP interventions act to reduce distress and provide the skills necessary to handle personal and work-related problems more effectively.

Finally, EAP is a vital component of Metro's overall effort to comply with federal regulations governing the prevention of drug abuse and alcohol misuse in transit operations. The EAP contractor also provides mandated services of a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP), as required whenever an employee tests positive for drugs or alcohol. The primary role of the SAP is to evaluate the employee and coordinate rehabilitation to ensure the safety of all employees and the traveling public.

## **DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT**

The Metro Employee Assistance Program (EAP) will provide the capability to support employees through challenges in multiple areas of their lives, ensuring job effectiveness and improved safety for employees and patrons.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The funding for EAP services is included in cost center 2465, EO, HC&D under project 100001, General Overhead. Since this is a multi-year contract, the Cost Center Manager and Chief, Human Capital and Development Officer will be responsible for budgeting the cost in future years, including any options exercised.

### **Impact to Budget**

The source of funds for this contract is General Overhead funds, comprised of Federal, State, and local funds. These funds are eligible for bus and rail operating costs.

## **EQUITY PLATFORM**

All employees and their household members are eligible for services and resources offered under the EAP. Based on approximately 11,000 employees, the EAP utilization rate is between 15-20% on the average. The program is promoted throughout Metro in announcements via the Daily Brief, posters and flyers distributed at Metro facilities, periodic home mailers, on Metro's intranet as well as phone, online website, and mobile app. Services are available 24/7 to accommodate employees'

communication preferences and busy schedules.

Metro reached out to a total of 304 DBE certified firms to notify them of this procurement opportunity. Further, advertisements were placed with the Los Angeles Daily News. The awarded contractor has met the 8% DBE commitment goal for the contract.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS**

The recommendation supports Strategic Plan Goal #5: To provide responsive, accountable, and trustworthy guidance within the Metro Organization; Initiative 5.6: As Metro will foster and maintain a strong safety culture for all. By approving this recommendation Metro will be able to ensure the safety for Metro's patrons and employees.

### **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

Perform the services in-house. This option is not a viable alternative because Metro does not have sufficient internal resources or subject matter experts available to perform the work. Contracted services of professionally certified counselors with diverse backgrounds and specializations would still need to be obtained by Metro if the subject services were brought in-house. Difficulties would also be encountered in serving the multiple locations and large number of family members throughout the local geographic area, as well as overcoming employee concerns about confidentiality issues. Metro has no history or experience with an internal EAP. Metro would not only need to undertake costly recruitment and training of Metro staff to perform these services, but Metro would also assume direct liability for any potential claims of malpractice. This is not a feasible alternative and therefore, is not recommended.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Upon Board approval, staff will execute Contract No. PS186372000 with ComPsych Corporation, effective November 1, 2021 and continue to provide EAP services.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

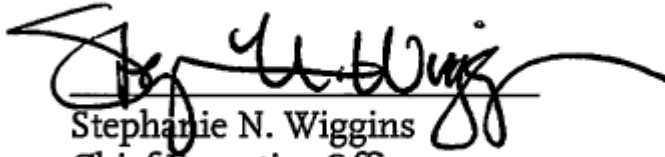
Attachment A - Procurement Summary

Attachment B - DEOD Summary

Prepared by: Dawn Jackson-Perkins, Director, Human Resources  
(213) 418-3166

Reviewed by: Patrice McElroy, Interim Chief Human Capital & Development Officer (213) 418-3171

Debra Avila, Chief Vendor/Contract Management Officer  
(213) 418-3051



Stephanie N. Wiggins  
Chief Executive Officer