



DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND SUPPORT SERVICES
CITY OF CHICAGO

April 5, 2018

Dear Delegate Agency Partner,

As you may recall, DFSS launched the Strategic Framework in early 2016 to transition our department to a more outcomes-oriented and data-driven approach for delivering services. At its heart, the Strategic Framework is about placing greater focus on the quality of services and client progress (outcomes), as opposed to the number of clients or units of service delivered (outputs).

With the upcoming release of the City's Community Development Grant Application (CDGA), we are fully entering the next phase of this work – incorporating the Strategic Framework into our contracting and engaging with the service provider community to improve outcomes in line with these goals.

We view the request for proposal (RFP) and contracting processes as critical tools that collectively enable us to:

- ensure outcomes are at the center of our work
- develop a shared understanding of what improvement looks like
- share information about best practices and high-quality services

As a result, applicants for DFSS programs through this year's CDGA will see some differences in our RFPs, selection criteria, and application questions, as compared to previous years. These changes seek to make our process more results-focused and are reflected in the RFP language through: a greater focus on goals, as opposed to activities; selection criteria and application questions that better align with our priorities and the human services field overall, and; more opportunities for applicants to provide relevant information about program quality, best practices, and performance.

We recognize that these changes may require additional work, and applicants will have an extended 45-day timeline to respond. We will be updating you and your staff throughout the process, beginning with a follow-up email from the Deputy Commissioners of each program division, and providing technical assistance throughout, beginning with a session on April 11 (registration information available [here](#)).

As I have mentioned before, the Strategic Framework remains a work in progress. The CDGA is DFSS' first opportunity to embed the approach we have been working on, together with our partners, over the past two years. It is not about playing "gotcha" or fixing something that was being done incorrectly. To the contrary – outcomes-based decision-making is a shift happening in human services nationally and we have an opportunity to be at the forefront of this because we share a common commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable Chicagoans.

Best regards,

Lisa Morrison Butler
Commissioner