

**ALTERNATIVES-TO-ABORTION SERVICES
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***ALTERNATIVES-TO-ABORTION SERVICES
OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH***

On November 1, 2006, the Oklahoma statute¹ “Alternatives-to-Abortions Services” became effective. As required by the statute, a related Board of Health rule² was brought before that Board in September 2006.

GENERAL PURPOSE

The Oklahoma State Department of Health is to contract with nongovernmental health care and special service organizations to provide alternatives-to-abortion services. Alternatives-to-abortion services means “those services that promote childbirth instead of abortion by providing information, counseling and support services that assist pregnant women or women who believe they may be pregnant to choose childbirth and to make informed decisions regarding the choice of adoption or parenting with respect to their children.” The services must be outcome-based with positive results.

The information, counseling and services provided under this program may include, but are not limited to:

1. Medical care;
2. Nutritional services;
3. Housing assistance;
4. Adoption services;
5. Educational and employment assistance, including services that support the continuation and completion of high school;
6. Child care assistance; and
7. Parenting education and support services.

MINIMUM AGENCY QUALIFICATIONS

The following requirements applied all bidding agencies:

- The agency must be a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.
- The agency must have had an alternatives-to-abortion program in place for at least one year as of November 1, 2006 or have incorporated an alternatives-to-abortion program that has been in existence for at least one year as of November 1, 2006.
- The agency’s alternatives-to-abortion program must have the purpose of assisting and encouraging women to carry their pregnancies to term.
- The agency must not charge women for alternatives-to-abortion services.
- The agency must have written privacy policies and procedures in place to ensure that any information that might identify any woman seeking services is not made public or shared with any other agency or organization without consent of the woman.
- The agency must have policies and procedures in place for the reporting of child abuse and neglect commensurate with Oklahoma law.

¹ Alternatives-to-Abortion Services 63 OS 1-740-11

² Alternatives-to-Abortion Services 310-527

- The agency must have policies and procedures in place requiring all staff, paid and voluntary, to undergo an OSBI background check. The background check must be completed and provided prior to the staff working in the alternatives-to-abortion program.
- The agency must have policies and procedures in place to ensure that women served are not discriminated against due to race or religion.
- Agency must be capable of collecting data and reporting the data in aggregate form on an annual basis.

As stated in the law, the OSDH may not contract with a provider of adoption services not licensed by the state of Oklahoma. The OSDH shall not award the alternatives-to-abortion funds to any organization or affiliate of any organization that provides or promotes abortion or directly refers for abortion; however, any nondirective counseling relating to the pregnancy shall not disqualify an organization from receiving these funds.

THE BIDDING PROCESS

The OSDH established seven separate Invitations to Bid:

- 1) Medical Care – award not to exceed \$10,000
- 2) Nutritional Services – award not to exceed \$5,000
- 3) Housing Services – award not to exceed \$10,000
- 4) Adoption Services – award not to exceed \$10,000
- 5) Education and Employment Assistance – award not to exceed \$5,000
- 6) Child Care Assistance – award not to exceed \$5,000
- 7) Parenting Education – award not to exceed \$5,000

The OSDH faxed or emailed the seven Invitations to Bid to approximately 180 potential bidders. A review committee of three professional staff evaluated the bids. The review committee made recommendations to the OSDH Chief of Procurement. The final awards were made in accordance with an established scoring tool developed by the OSDH and rules established by the Oklahoma Department of Central Services.

CONTRACT AWARDS

Through a standardized process and in conjunction with the Department of Central Services, five contracts were awarded three year, renewable contracts:

- 1) Birth Choice of Oklahoma: Medical Services for \$10,000 per year
- 2) Birth Choice of Oklahoma/Rose Home: Nutritional Services for \$5,000 per year
- 3) Birth Choice of Oklahoma: Housing Services for \$10,000 per year
- 4) Birth Choice of Oklahoma: Education and Employment Assistance for \$5,000 per year
- 5) Pregnancy Center of Tahlequah: Parenting Education for \$5,000 per year

There were no successful bidders for the Invitation to Bids related to adoption or child care.

Only one contract was active and requesting reimbursement prior to June 30, 2010. The contract was with Birth Choice/Rose Home for Nutrition Services.

OUTCOMES FOR THE BIRTH CHOICE/ROSE HOME NUTRITIONAL SERVICES

Rose Home: Rose Home is an emergency shelter, established in 1986, serving homeless, pregnant women and their children. Rose Home is a 501(c) 3 non-profit housing up to seven mothers at one time. Residents must be totally drug and alcohol free. Residential candidates must be at least 18 years of age. All referrals come through Birth Choice of Oklahoma. Residents may reside in the facility for up to 90 days after the birth of their baby with exceptions made when clients are continuing to work towards goals related to child rearing and/or becoming self-sufficient.

Client services provided at Rose Home include furnished housing, meals, case management, transportation for all necessary appointments, clothing, tutoring, parenting and child development education and adoption services if needed.

Demographics: During the contract period, as many as six mothers and six children lived at Rose Home. None of the mothers were married. Most were single, having never been married, while two were divorced. The mothers' ages ranged from 18 years of age to over 35 years of age. The majority of mothers classified themselves as white while others served included Native Americans, one Latina and one of mixed races. All mothers were residents of Oklahoma County prior to their stay at Rose Home.

Outcomes: A total of \$4,997 was reimbursed to Rose Home for State Fiscal Year 2010 to achieve the outcomes listed below:

- Nutritious foods were purchased that were consumed by the Rose Home residents as either meals or snacks throughout their stay. Meals were prepared by the residents with assistance from staff.
- Nutrition education was provided to the residents by Barbara Cunningham, R.D., L.D. of Banister Nutrition Consulting. The education included topics such as food safety, childhood nutrition, the Food Guide Pyramid, food preparation, recipe exchange, and information regarding food assistance programs.
- All babies born to mothers staying at the Rose Home were within the normal category for birth weight. All babies were at least 6.4 pounds at delivery including a set of twins.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information regarding the Alternative-to-Abortion Services, please contact:

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