



CITY OF DULUTH
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

RFP NUMBER 25-AA20
ISSUED SEPTEMBER 10, 2025

PROPOSALS DUE WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2025

SUBMIT TO

CITY OF DULUTH
ATTN: PURCHASING DIVISION
CITY HALL, ROOM 120
411 WEST 1ST STREET
DULUTH, MN 55802

PART I - GENERAL INFORMATION

I-1. Introduction and Project Summary. The City is seeking proposals from qualified vendors to administer a comprehensive Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Applicants are required to have a minimum of five years of experience in administering this type of service. Additional detail can be found in detail provided in **Part IV** of this RFP. Services offered under the current EAP Program can be found in Appendix B.

I-2. Calendar of Events. The City will make every effort to adhere to the following schedule:

Activity	Date
Optional Pre-proposal Conference at 1:30 pm	Tuesday, 9/16/25
Deadline to submit Questions via email to purchasing@duluthmn.gov	Tuesday, 9/23/25
Answers to questions will be posted to the City website no later than this date.	Thursday, 9/25/25
Proposals must be received in the Purchasing Office by 3:00PM on this date.	10/1/25
Anticipated contract effective date.	1/1/26

I-3. Interviews. The City reserves the right to hold interviews with proposers if deemed to be in the best interest of the City.

I-4. Rejection of Proposals. The City reserves the right, in its sole and complete discretion, to reject any and all proposals or cancel the request for proposals, at any time prior to the time a contract is fully executed, when it is in its best interests. The City is not liable for any costs the Bidder incurs in preparation and submission of its proposal, in participating in the RFP process or in anticipation of award of the contract.

I-5. Pre-proposal Conference. The City will hold an optional virtual pre-proposal conference as specified in the Calendar of Events. Interested Bidders can attend via Teams meeting from 1:30pm-2:30pm [by clicking this link](#).

I-6. Questions & Answers. Any questions regarding this RFP must be submitted by e-mail to the Purchasing Office at purchasing@duluthmn.gov **no later than** the date indicated on the Calendar of Events. Answers to the questions will be posted as an Addendum to the RFP.

I-7. Addenda to the RFP. If the City deems it necessary to revise any part of this RFP before the proposal response date, the City will post an addendum to its website <http://www.duluthmn.gov/purchasing/bids-request-for-proposals/>. Although an e-mail

notification will be sent, it is the Bidder's responsibility to periodically check the website for any new information.

I-8. Proposal Submission. To be considered, hard copies of proposals must arrive at the City on or before the time and date specified in the RFP Calendar of Events. The City will not accept proposals via email or facsimile transmission. The City reserves the right to reject or to deduct evaluation points for late proposals.

Proposals must be signed by an authorized official. If the official signs the Proposal Cover Sheet attached as Appendix A, this requirement will be met. Proposals must remain valid for 60 days or until a contract is fully executed.

Please submit one (1) original and four paper copies of the Technical Submittal. In addition, and in an envelope sealed separately from the technical proposals, please submit one (1) original and 4 paper copies of the Cost Submittal.

All materials submitted in response to this RFP will become property of the City and will become public record after the evaluation process is completed and an award decision made.

I-9.Small Diverse Business Information. The City encourages participation by minority, women, and veteran-owned businesses as prime contractors, and encourages all prime contractors to make a significant commitment to use minority, women, veteran-owned and other disadvantaged business entities as subcontractors and suppliers. A list of certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprises is maintained by the Minnesota Unified Certification Program at <http://mnucp.metc.state.mn.us/>.

I-10. Term of Contract. The initial term of the contract will be for two years, beginning January 1, 2026, with two optional one-year renewals. Prices submitted with the proposal must remain firm for the initial term of the contract. Prices may be negotiated for each renewal.

I-11. Mandatory Disclosures. By submitting a proposal, each Bidder understands, represents, and acknowledges that:

- A. Their proposal has been developed by the Bidder independently and has been submitted without collusion with and without agreement, understanding, or planned common course of action with any other vendor or suppliers of materials, supplies, equipment, or services described in the Request for Proposals, designed to limit independent bidding or competition, and that the contents of the proposal have not been communicated by the Bidder or its employees or agents to any person not an employee or agent of the Bidder.
- B. There is no conflict of interest. A conflict of interest exists if a Bidder has any interest that would actually conflict, or has the appearance of

conflicting, in any manner or degree with the performance of work on the project. If there are potential conflicts, identify the municipalities, developers, and other public or private entities with whom your company is currently, or have been, employed and which may be affected.

- C. It is not currently under suspension or debarment by the State of Minnesota, any other state or the federal government.
- D. The company is either organized under Minnesota law or has a Certificate of Authority from the Minnesota Secretary of State to do business in Minnesota, in accordance with the requirements in M.S. 303.03.

I-12. Notification of Selection. Bidders whose proposals are not selected will be notified in writing.

PART II - PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Technical Proposal (no costs are to be included in the technical proposal)

1. Cover letter providing the history of your company
2. Comprehensiveness of services offered to meet basic service requirements (limit to 10 pages)
3. Optional additional services or recommendations (limit to 2 pages)
4. Number of licensed providers within a 30-mile radius and any restrictions on services available/provide a geo access report (limit to 3 pages)
5. Sample brochure
6. Three references, at least one of which is a public entity

Cost Proposal

Cost proposal which details competitive fees for specific services offered and any discounts provided. Cost proposal shall include:

1. Annual fee for total of all basic services
2. Annual fee for any optional or additional recommended services
3. A per-instance fee for any optional or additional recommended services

PART III - CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

The proposals will be reviewed by City Staff. The intent of the selection process is to review proposals and make an award based upon qualifications as described therein. A 100-point scale will be used to create the final evaluation recommendations. The City will look to contract with a vendor who can provide the most comprehensive set of core benefits to participants at a reasonable cost. The services provided should address the wide range of unique needs among participants. The factors and weighting on which proposals will be judged are:

Comprehensiveness of services available	25%
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Quantity and proximity of qualified providers	25%
Customizability of services to meet City needs	15%
Communications/promotional material & support	5%
References	5%
Cost	25%

PART IV – PROJECT DETAIL

The City of Duluth is seeking proposals for an EAP program that serves the City of Duluth and Duluth Airport Authority. The program will serve approximately 950 employees as well as the employees’ household members and immediate family members, collectively referred to as “participants.” Participants reside and receive medical services in both Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Basic Services

The organization selected will provide the services below as part of a basic service package for an annual fee. Proposer shall detail the services with enough information so evaluators can review and award to the proposer best suited to meet the City’s needs:

1. Dedicated account manager.
2. Educate participants on the EAP program. Provide City with all brochures and digital materials, including orientation videos, regarding the EAP program as part of the cost of administering the program.
3. Provide participant-specific services to participants who have been referred to EAP or who request such services of their own volition.
4. Maintain confidentiality, except as specifically waived by participant; and always comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
5. Strive to provide short-term counseling where feasible and not simply act as a clearinghouse.
6. Counsel, refer and encourage participants to proceed with a course of assistance. Identify method by which you will assist participants in continuing service with the least financial impact to participant.
7. Counselors must have at least a master’s degree in psychology, as well as several years of clinical experience. Bidder will have counselors licensed in each or both states of Minnesota and Wisconsin.
8. Ensure that participants have access to qualified, professional counselors that are located within a 30-mile radius of the City. A geo access report must be provided, indicating at a minimum which services are provided at each location.

9. Monitor referred participants' adherence to the agreed course of treatment and provide progress reports to the City on referred participants. Such reports will respect the participants' rights to confidentiality and will be limited to reporting as to whether the participant is cooperating with the treatment program.
10. Provide quarterly reports on the caseload activities of the provider, maintaining confidentiality rights of the participants.
11. With respect to inquiries regarding the City's policies and procedures, the Bidder shall act only in the role of counselor/mediator and not provide legal advice to the participant.
12. The EAP program **shall include** the following services:
 - a) Diagnostic, evaluation and referral services for participants — a minimum of 4 counseling sessions per year per incident for the purpose of assessment, short-term counseling and referral. Provide 24-hour coverage for crisis situations.
 - b) Unlimited telephonic counseling and unlimited access to web and online services and information.
 - c) Quarterly training sessions on topics approved or determined by City.
 - d) Nationwide network of professional EAP counselors, with in-person, telephonic, video or chat sessions offered. Bidder to include the number of counselors in the network.
 - e) Telephones staffed by master's level counselors and personally answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Standard response to online referrals within 24 hours, with none more than 48 hours.
 - f) Serve as City's DOT-qualified Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) for the purposes of referral from the City's drug and alcohol testing program.
 - g) On-site assistance in the event of a catastrophic event or employee death (critical incident support).
 - h) Provide additional resources outside of mental health counseling including but not limited to legal and financial resources, coaching, medical advocacy, and other work-life resources.
13. With respect to inquiries regarding the City's policies and procedures, the Vendor shall act only in the role of counselor/mediator and not provide legal advice to the participant.

Additional/Optional Services

The following services may be of interest and should be described in the Technical Proposal and priced as both an annual cost and a per-instance cost in the Cost Proposal.

- Critical Incident Support
- Additional on-site or virtual training seminars
- Organizational development assessment and planning for specific departments at the request of the Human Resources Division
- Mediation services between employees or between supervisors and employees
- Additional training materials such as monthly newsletters and live webinars and on-demand webinars accessible through the vendor's website
- Consultations for Human Resources, Leadership, and Supervisors/Management as needed.
- Digital Cognitive Behavioral Therapy as needed

Bidder should provide a list of all other available services in the Technical Proposal, and provide the annual and per-instance costs for each within the Cost Proposal

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Proposal Cover Sheet

Appendix B – Current EAP Services

**APPENDIX A - PROPOSAL COVER SHEET
CITY OF DULUTH
25-AA20 RFP for Employee Assistance Program**

Bidder Information:	
Bidder Name	
Mailing Address	
Contact Person	
Contact Person's Phone Number	
Contact Person's E-Mail Address	
Federal ID Number	
Authorized Signature	
Name & Title of Authorized Signer	
Email of Authorized Signer	

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF ADDENDA

ADDENDUM #	INITIAL/DATE
ADDENDUM #	INITIAL/DATE
ADDENDUM #	INITIAL/DATE

**APPENDIX B – CURRENT EAP BENEFITS
CITY OF DULUTH
25-AA20 RFP for Employee Assistance Program**

Current Eap Benefits Include:

- 4 Mental health sessions per issue per year
- Intake 24/7/365 live immediate assistance
- In the moment mental health telephonic support
- Mental Health Counseling: in-person, telephonic, video or chat sessions
- Network includes over 20,000 counselors nationally
- Member portal and mobile app
- Dedicated account manager
- Program implementation
- Digital promotional materials, orientation videos; landing page; monthly newsletters and live webinars
- Virtual leader and participant orientation
- Work-life resources & referrals
- Legal & Financial resources and referrals
- Life Coaching
- Personal Assistant services
- Medical Advocacy services
- Utilizations Reports

Current EAP Provider also offers services available on fee-for service basis:

- Critical Incident Support
- On-site or virtual training seminars
- DOT qualified substance abuse professional services