



DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND SUPPORT SERVICES  
CITY OF CHICAGO

April 13, 2021

Dear Delegate Agency Partner,

DFSS launched our Commitment to Outcomes in early 2016 to transition to a more results-oriented and data-driven approach to delivering services – one that moves the department beyond measuring how many people receive services (quantity), to focus on how Chicagoans leave better off after receiving services (quality and impact).

As you may recall, the 2018 release of the City's Community Development Grant Application (CDGA) was DFSS' first opportunity to embed this approach into our contracting process and engagement with service providers. The goal was to shift the way we view the request for proposal (RFP) – from an administrative requirement to a strategic tool that collectively enables us to:

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

This year's CDGA represents a milestone in this process, as it is our first opportunity to iterate on RFPs with the benefit of the lessons learned through our continued partnership in delivering services with you – from surveys and roundtable discussions to ongoing delegate meetings and data-driven performance management.

In response to your feedback, respondents to DFSS programs through this year's CDGA will again see some adjustments in our RFPs, selection criteria, and application questions. In particular, we have focused on more clearly describing program expectations and priorities for improvement, while continuing to provide more opportunities for respondents to communicate relevant information about program quality, best practices, and performance.


Additionally, given events over the past year, we have reviewed all of our RFPs to integrate a greater focus on equity and lessons learned about service delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is important to note that some aspects of the RFP process are citywide and beyond DFSS' ability to change significantly. For example, we recognize that the application system – eProcurement – can be cumbersome and will be providing additional guidance to help respondents navigate this process.

With this in mind, I ask that you share all of our upcoming communications with the staff most involved in developing and submitting RFPs for your organization, and encourage them to read these materials closely. 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, with sessions beginning on April 19 (schedule and registration information available [here](#)).

The Commitment to Outcomes remains a work in progress. But as we get deeper into this work together, we hope that you will continue to recognize this shift in the way we communicate our goals, priorities, and strategies, and work together with you to improve the lives of vulnerable Chicagoans.

Best regards,



Brandie V. Knazze  
Acting Commissioner