

Administrative Office of the Courts

Supreme Court of New Mexico

Arthur W. Pepin, Director



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MEMORANDUM

TO: AOC Contract Attorneys

FROM: Administrative Office of the Courts

DATE: April 19, 2022

SUBJECT: Solicitation for Letters of Interest for New Mexico Family Advocacy Program Respondent Attorneys

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), through the New Mexico Family Advocacy Program (NMFAP), invites letters of interest from licensed attorneys who currently have or will have an AOC Court Appointed Respondent Attorney contract as of July 1, 2022, **anywhere in the state and in particular within Doña Ana, San Juan and McKinley Counties**. The NMFAP is funded through a federal cooperative agreement from the Children's Bureau to provide respondents in Child Welfare cases with an interdisciplinary legal team made up of an attorney, social worker, and a parent peer mentor (parent with previous lived experience with the system). The legal team provides high quality and zealous advocacy to clients, in order to address the circumstances that may have brought them into the system, with the aim of working with the client toward a better and faster outcome for all involved.

The successful applicant will be offered a separate respondent attorney contract in addition to their Court Appointed Respondent Attorney contract awarded through the AOC. The NMFAP Respondent Attorney contract requires practitioners to elevate their practice and advocacy in keeping with the goals and expectations of the program as further outlined below. Compensation shall fall be between \$5,000.00-\$32,000.00, annually, depending on the number of child abuse and neglect case filed within the county of service and availability and authorization of grant funds. Compensation will be paid out in 12 monthly installments for services satisfactorily performed and reported on time, as determined by and at the sole discretion of the AOC.

Letters of interest shall include all relevant contact information including name, street address, phone number(s), and email address. Letters of interest will consist of a resume and a brief statement outlining legal experience and training in Child Welfare as well as interest and understanding of interdisciplinary practice within child abuse and neglect cases.

NMFAP contract attorneys are required to work with a master level social worker and a parent peer mentor as a part of a respondent's legal team on assigned child abuse and neglect cases. NMFAP contract attorneys must:

- commit to providing high quality and zealous advocacy for clients in child welfare cases
- continually review and follow best practices as outlined in the NM Children's Code and the [NMFAP](#)

Practice Guide

- ensure communication is occurring, at minimum, once every other week with the interdisciplinary team and client when possible, to substantively discuss the case and legal strategy
- participate in ongoing program trainings, meetings, and evaluation components as requested by AOC
- understand that a social worker and parent mentor are equal members of the respondent's legal team and are professional practitioners within their own specialized fields who will not act as legal assistants to the attorney
- file affidavits and orders of appearance on behalf of the social worker and parent mentor with the court on assigned cases
- submit monthly service logs and invoices within outlined deadlines
- regularly and proactively communicate with their client, legal team, and the AOC in keeping with interdisciplinary practice and high quality advocacy
- regularly utilize Google Drive or designated case management system to upload case documents and input case information in a timely manner for use by the legal team
- must be licensed to practice in the state of New Mexico and have professional liability insurance

Letters of interest and accompanying resumes should be emailed to Corrie Griffith, NMFAP Program Manager, at aoccag@nmcourts.gov, no later than Friday, May 20, 2022. Please visit <https://nmfap.nmcourts.gov/> for more information on the program.