



START Treatment & Recovery Centers, Inc.

Request for Proposal

THIRD PARTY BILLING SERVICES

**RESPONSES TO THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL MUST BE
DELIVERED ELECTRONICALLY TO**

START Treatment & Recovery Centers, Inc.

Attention: Hilary M. Castillo, Chief Operating Officer

Brian Lanouette, Interim Chief Financial Officer

Final Proposal Due: July 21, 2023, 5:00PM

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A. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

About START Treatment and Recovery Centers, Inc.

START Treatment & Recovery Centers, Inc. (“START”) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation that is a community-based organization. It is one of the nation’s largest and oldest minority-led addiction treatment, behavioral health services, and biomedical research agencies, founded in 1969 by the renowned national authority on drug addiction, Dr. Beny J. Primm. Since its inception, START has provided a wide range of comprehensive healthcare, including HIV/AIDS care and substance abuse treatment to over 30,000 patients throughout Brooklyn and Manhattan, New York. Serving patients throughout the New York Metropolitan area, START’s programs are operated from six (6) sites, in Fort Greene, East New York, Bushwick, East Harlem, Central Harlem, and Washington Heights. The organization employs a staff of nearly 300 and maintains treatment for over 4,000 patients each year.

START operates the following healthcare programs:

- Eight (8) substance use disorder treatment outpatient programs, including seven (7) opioid treatment programs (OTPs), which programs include behavioral health counseling and psychiatric services, certified by the New York State (NYS) Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS), under Article 32 of the Mental Hygiene Law. START OTPs are also certified by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).
- Teen START, an outpatient program offering mental health services for adolescents, licensed under the NYS Office of Mental Health, under Article 31 of the Mental Hygiene Law.
- START facilities, which house all its programs, are each licensed to provide primary care services and limited laboratory services by the NYS Department of Health Office of Primary Care and Health Systems Management under Article 28 of the Public Health Law.

START’s opioid treatment programs offer detoxification, maintenance, and opioid-to-abstinence drug treatment programs characterized by intensive and frequent contact with medical, counseling, and social service staff. Substance abuse services also include drug/alcohol abuse prevention; comprehensive mental health counseling and group facilitation; life skills training; voter registration education; vocational and education assessments; women's treatment groups and services; HIV case management; and self-help groups.

Our integrated, multidisciplinary care model, including programs that offer specialist treatment for HIV and Hepatitis C, and vocational education, is equipped to engage patients as partners with their providers in their recovery, treatment for chronic conditions, and health promotion.

B. PROCUREMENT NEED

START currently bills Medicaid and approximately 10 managed care companies under Ambulatory Payment Group (APG) system on a weekly basis for the services rendered to its 4,000 patients. It is expected that START will contract with commercial payers in the future. Billings are for MATP, Chemical Dependence, Primary Care, and Buprenorphine services. Annual third-party revenue to be billed is estimated to be between \$24 and \$30 million. On average, START submits 14,000 services weekly, which equates to 2,700 claims.

START is seeking written proposals from qualified contractors who can perform these billings and provide electronic remittance details and eligibility verification. Billing frequency is initially weekly. When weekly episodes of care billings are not mandated by OASAS, the selected contractor will be required to bill more frequently. The selected contractor must be able to expand, upgrade, and reallocate resources and capabilities to meet the following objectives as they occur:

- Increases in volume
- Increases or variances in services offered
- Changes in regulatory payment structure(s)
- Patient privacy and protection concerns
- Payer submission rules
- Change in payers billed
- Changes in federal and state mandates

The selected contractor will be required to perform the following functions:

- Account billing and reconciliation (payment posting)
- Medicaid eligibility verification before submission
- Resubmitting claims, adjusting claims with mistakes, and appealing denied claims
- Coding and auditing
- Claim submission rejection reports

START currently captures services data in its proprietary electronic system, 10e11, as well as in the eClinicalWorks (eCW) system, an electronic medical report application.

The minimum qualifications for contractors shall include:

- Extensive experience managing the billing for New York State agencies. Examples include OASAS and OMH, as well as knowledge about the transition of OASAS and OMH services to Medicaid Managed Care, in addition to commercial managed care plans and self-pay
- Experience in providing services similar to those outlined in the Scope of Work below

C. TERM OF CONTRACT

The term of the contract will commence on the Commencement of Work Date (as defined below) and will be for three (3) years.

D. SCOPE OF WORK

The selected firm will provide revenue cycle management services to START, including claim review, claim submission, denial and open claim resolution, and provide START with access to the system, which should include Dashboards, Reports, Issue Tracking, and full transparency around all billing activity. The contractor should provide training to how to use the system and run reports. START is not only seeking a vendor for billing, but also a trusted ally in the healthcare industry. The selected firm should be able to provide a variety of services, including but not limited to the following tasks:

- Claim processing, including fee-for-service, Medicaid Managed Care, Medicare, commercial, and self-pay
- Billing processing
- Identification of open and denied claims, including the resolution of all issues surrounding the denials and non-adjudicated claims
- Documentation, assignment, and tracking of issues or exceptions identified
- Full documentation around any claim that has an identified issue in order to give full transparency to START on the actions being taken on the claims
- Provide transparency around the billing process in real-time, including high-level dashboards and a complete set of revenue cycle production reports to provide START with complete accounting of all billing activity being provided by the contractor.
- Import pre-submission review, including:
 - Scrubbing files received and the identification and reporting of any issues to START
 - Notifying all eligible Medicaid members
 - Labeling of issues for claims with invalid Client Identification numbers
 - Utilizing a rules-engine to ensure that carve-in, zero-fill, billing, and payer rules are applied correctly
 - Claim pricing according to NYS guidance
 - Identifying issues with claims that have insufficient data to avoid rejection (e.g., invalid ICD-10 diagnoses codes)
 - Importing of clean claims to the clearinghouse
- Review of claim submissions:
 - Receive validation from the clearinghouse and upload validations, which indicates whether the claims are accepted or rejected
 - If the contractor cannot resolve a rejection, then place the claims on an issue tracker for START to follow up (e.g., invalid commercial subscriber ID)
 - Send claims to the payers for adjudication if they are accepted by the clearinghouse

- If the payer does not accept the claim, then the contractor will review the rejection and place it in the issue tracker if it requires START intervention
- Remittance and Accounts Receivable activities, including:
 - Posting electronic remittance reports showing a collection of claims, which are electronically received by START via ACH
 - Receive manual/paper EOBs for payers who do not send electronic remittance, and post to the system
 - Conduct denials and underpayment review, as well as unadjudicated claims review. The contractor will then follow-up with payers for any uncollected claims, resolution of denials, adjustments, etc.
 - Handle crossovers for Coordination of Benefits
 - Track issues related to denied/underpaid claims which involve START's input for resubmission (e.g., requires authorization or coverage termination)
 - Track issues related to claims that require START to approve self-pay (e.g., no active payer coverage)
 - Allow START to download billing transactions for recording to the General Ledger

E. MINORITY AND WOMEN OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

To the extent that Firm employs any subcontractor or otherwise authorizes another person or entity to fulfill any of its duties under the contract awarded from this RFP or retains any supplier in connection with the contract, Firm agrees that it will adhere to the provisions of New York State Executive Law Article 15-A and 5 NYCRR Part 142, which provisions are intended to promote and advance the participation of minority group members and women-owned business enterprises (MWBs) in certain contract opportunities.

F. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

In performing the contract awarded from this RFP, the Firm will ensure that each subcontractor and supplier performing work on the contract will undertake or continue existing Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) programs to ensure that minority group members and women are afforded equal employment opportunities without discrimination because of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or marital status. For these purposes, EEO will apply in the areas of recruitment, employment, job assignment, promotion, upgrading, demotion, transfer, layoff, or termination and rates of pay or other forms of compensation.

Firm will submit its EEO policy statement to START upon execution of the contract and any amendments thereto will be provided within a reasonable period thereafter.



G. COMPLIANCE WITH POLICIES

Firm will comply and ensure that Firm employees and subcontracted agents comply with all of START’s policies and procedures, including, without limitation, those governing START’s information technology systems and health screening requirements.

H. RFP SCHEDULE

- RFP Available to Firm June 26, 2023
- Questions to be submitted July 10, 2023
- Answers available July 12, 2023
- Final Proposals Due July 21, 2023
- Presentation Meetings/Interviews July 24 - 31, 2023
- Contract Award & Notice to Proceed August 3, 2023
- Commencement of Work August 7, 2023

I. CONTACTS

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J. PROPOSAL QUESTIONS

Upon review of the RFP documents, Vendors may have questions to clarify or interpret the RFP to submit the best proposal possible. To accommodate the Proposal Questions process, Vendors must submit any such questions by the above due date.

Written questions must be emailed to HCastillo@startny.org and blanouette@startny.org by the date and time specified above. Vendors should enter “RFP Professional Services Questions” as the subject for the email. Questions submittals should include a reference to the applicable RFP sections and be submitted in a format show below:

Reference	Vendor Questions
RFP Section, Page Number	Vendor Questions...?

Questions received prior to the submission deadline date, START’s response, and any additional terms deemed necessary by START will be posted in the form of an addendum to <https://www.startny.org/business-opportunities>, and will become an addendum to the RFP. No information, instruction or advice provided orally or informally by any START personnel, whether made in response to a question or otherwise in connection with this RFP, will be considered authoritative or binding. Vendors will rely only on written information that is contained in an addendum to this RFP.

K. GUIDELINE FOR PROPOSAL PREPARATION

Award of the contract resulting from this RFP will be based upon the responsive Firm whose proposal is most advantageous to START in terms of cost, engagement duration and candidate’s ability to meet START’s needs as specified elsewhere in this RFP.

START reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability to any potential Firm,
- Accept other than the lowest priced offer,
- Award a contract based on initial offers received, without discussions or request for best and final offers, or
- Award more than one contract.

Firm’s proposal must be submitted in several parts as set forth below. The Firm will confine its submission to those matters sufficient to define its proposal.

Firm’s proposal in response to this RFP will be incorporated into the final agreement between START and the selected Firm(s). **It is the Vendor’s sole responsibility to ensure its proposal has been submitted to START by the specified time and date referenced above in Sections 1 of this RFP.** The submitted proposals are suggested to include each of the following sections:

1. Executive Summary

This section will present a high-level synopsis of the Firm’s responses to the RFP. The Executive Summary should include a summary of the Firm, and its culture, description of experience, expertise, and organizational capacity in servicing non-profit, health and human services organizations.

Describe the Firm's core billing services. Include a summary of what differentiates the Firm from competitors.

2. Scope, Approach and Methodology

Include descriptions for the various activities that the vendor will conduct.

3. Engagement Approach

Include the method and approach used to manage the scope described in this RFP and client correspondence. Briefly describe how the engagement proceeds from beginning to end.

4. Deliverables

Include descriptions of what your services will deliver within the statement of work.

5. Proposed Services Team

Provide current copies of resumes, business licenses and operating certificates, for the personnel and for the legal entity. A description of key staff proposed to be assigned to START's account. Include biographies for each member of the core services team and indication at minimum at an organizational level of ancillary service providers.

6. Transition Proposal

Provide a plan which outlines the procedures and a draft timeline the bidder expects to use in performing a transition from a current provider to a new provider (if applicable). Include a start-up plan which outlines the bidder's approach to having START as a client in the first 90 days (about 3 months) of contract award.

7. Detailed Cost Breakdown

- a. Include a detailed breakdown of all hourly rates.
- b. Specify which services are included in this compensation and which services would require additional fees.

8. Potential Conflict of Interest

Detail here any personal or professional relationship that the Firm has with any START employee, Board member or Advisory Council member. If there is none, state None.

9. Appendix:

- **Company Overview** – A brief history and overview of your company, and your work in healthcare and with the New York State Medicaid programs specifically. Other information about the Company that should be discussed are as follows:
 - a. Company’s headquarters
 - b. Company’s annual revenue or book of business
 - c. Target market
 - d. Organizational demographic diversity information, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives and programs
 - e. Competitive edge of the proposed services over competitors
 - f. Client retention metrics or information
 - g. Employee turnover metrics or information
 - h. Description of Company’s market focus specifically to nonprofits in the healthcare and human services sector
 - i. Sample materials that are representative of the support that the Firm provider to clients.
 - j. Standard terms of service the organization uses with its clients.
 - k. Include at least two (2) examples of the Firm’s success in conducting third party billing for clients.

- **Firm References** – provide at least five (5) client references that are similar in size and complexity to this RFP and have utilized the proposed billing solution in a comparable environment. References should be for fully completed (live) installations.

L. CONTRACT REVIEW

START’s standard master services contract, and statement of work form is attached to this RFP. Please review and, if there are aspects of the standard contract that your organization cannot agree to, detail the requested changes in your response.

END