

Invitation to Pre Tender Meeting for Community Legal Advice Specialists Family Telephone Advice Contracts

Following the progress of the Community Legal Advice Specialist Family Telephone Advice Pilot (launched in October 2007, to run for a period of 12 months) the LSC is presently considering expanding the service offered in the pilot, by way of a National Roll Out Tender, and with this would like to invite and communicate with providers interested.

Community Legal Advice (CLA) is a telephone helpline that provides free legal advice direct to the public on a range of common legal problems. It was launched in July 2004 by the Legal Services Commission and now receives **in excess of 60,000 calls per month**. The helpline offers specialist advice, including casework, to clients eligible for legal aid. Legal advice and information is currently available in the categories of debt, housing, education, employment, and welfare benefits and through this tender family will be added to the categories where specialist advice is available. CLA currently receives over **3,000 family enquiries** a month and this number is expected to increase once specialist telephone advice is available in this category.

In respect of the service requirement of our proposals, we are seeking to communicate with those able to offer specialist advice in Family Law. Organisations with experience of delivering telephone advice and be able to secure a sufficient pool of advisers with a thorough knowledge of Family Law are preferred. Advisers can be solicitors or non-solicitors supervised by an individual that meets the Commission's supervisor standards. No minimum size of contract bid is proposed but it is likely that those organisations with a large pool of advisers will be more able to offer a better value for money bid.

Organisations such as solicitors, commercial call centres, not for profit advice agencies and other public bodies are invited to bid; tenders from all types of organisations will be treated equally but preference will be given to organisations that can demonstrate quality, value for money and the ability to grow in size as demand dictates.

If you believe you can meet these requirements and are interested in tendering for the service, we would like to invite you to attend an 'Open Day Meeting', which will provide more information about the service, the tender process and how we will work with the successful contractors. For those unable to attend, please be advised, the information shared on the day, will be posted, shortly after on our website, www.legalservices.gov.uk under 'CLS' – 'Civil Areas of Work' – 'Family' – 'Areas of Work'.

The meeting will be held on 09 June 2008 at 12:00pm (refreshments available from 11:30am) at the New Connaught Rooms, 61-65 Great Queen Street, London, WC2B 5DA.

Places are limited to one per organisation (you may request additional spaces and, if capacity exists, these will be allocated). If you wish to attend, please email Laura Newhofer at laura.newhofer@legalservices.gov.uk or call on 0207 759 1122.

Please note we reserve the right not to award any contract relating to the subject matter of this notice.