

American Humane Association

1. Advisory Group: Does the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) have an ongoing Advisory Group of dependency attorneys, juvenile court judicial officers and appellate court judges?

There is a Judicial Council Advisory Committee, "The Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee" which is comprised in part of the types of individuals listed above. The Committee is responsible for making recommendations to the Judicial Council on a wide variety of issues effecting family and juvenile court procedures, rules and policies.

2. Are there groups of dependency attorneys who share common email systems, listserves or other common technology? The RFP states that the approximately 800 dependency counsel statewide have widely varying technological resources, specifically with respect to access the Internet and Microsoft Excel. Are there, however, groups of counsel who may have better access to internet and Excel technology, e.g. counsel in major metropolitan areas such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, Orange County and Sacramento? Is it reasonable to expect that some data collection can occur electronically rather than on paper forms in these locations that may have better technology access?

There are groups of counsel with access to the Internet and Microsoft Excel, although access cannot be assumed simply based upon location within a metropolitan area. It is reasonable to assume that some data collection can occur electronically.

3. Could training in study data collection methodology also be disseminated electronically to a central location in these areas?

Yes, if that will achieve the goal of ensuring that attorneys required to complete the workload study forms understand how to do so.

4. May we have a copy of the Disabled Veterans Business Enterprise (DVBE) list from your office?

No. You may get the list by contacting the individual listed on page 8, item 6.0 of the RFP.

5. Fiscal and Practice Implications

We would like to inquire whether determination of the fiscal and practice impact of caseload standards is part of the work required under this RFP or is considered to be follow up work that will be part of another project. On page 3 of the RFP, it seems to imply that this is follow up work: “Once caseload standards have been identified, contractor will work with AOC staff to determine the fiscal and practice implications of their adoption.” Yet on page 4 of the RFP, it is implied that this is part of the work under this RFP: “ With AOC staff, identify dependency attorney caseload standards based upon requisite attorney activities and tasks with associated time. Determine fiscal and practice implications of adopting caseload standards as identified.” To what extent is delineating the fiscal and practice implications of the standards a part of the work of this project? Should a section of the project report discuss these implications? Is greater detail expected? Please provide some guidance around the extent to which this forms a part of the work.

Delineating the fiscal and practice implications of adoption of the caseload standards as identified is an integral part of the work of the project. The consultant’s final report should reflect an analysis of the fiscal and practice implications of the adoption of caseload standards on a county-by-county basis, assuming that the providers and rate structures in each county remain constant.

Harvey Rose Accountancy Corporation

1. What is the chief problem created for the State by the lack of uniformity in juvenile dependency case standards?

There are two distinct and equally important issues driving the need to develop standards in this area. On the fiscal side, the credibility of court-appointed counsel budget requests with the state Department of Finance and the Legislature is jeopardized by the lack of a clear understanding of what the state is paying for when allocating money to address court-appointed counsel costs. The other issue to be addressed by the development of caseload standards is the need to ensure uniform quality legal services for both parents and children subject to the state’s dependency adjudication process in all court systems throughout the state.

2. Is cost containment one of the State’s goals in developing standards for court-appointed juvenile dependency proceedings or is the identification of best practices more important, with less emphasis on cost reduction?

The identification of best practices is more important than the issue of cost containment.

3. Does the AOC assume there will be one set of statewide standards or would it be possible to have different standards for different types of jurisdictions (e.g. small population, low caseload counties versus high populations, high volume juvenile dependency caseloads)?

It is assumed that different caseload standards will be developed. Some of the variables AOC staff has considered that would impact the caseload standards are: availability of support staff (i.e. if an attorney has support staff he/she will be able to carry more cases), remote geographic locations/extensive travel time (will result in an attorney being able to carry less cases), whether or not an attorney carries a full or part-time dependency caseload.

4. Is one of the goals of the study to develop a common, statewide rate and common statewide rate structure (e.g. payment per hours per task)? Will the contractor be asked to consider whether rates should vary across the state depending on cost of living?

The analysis of rate structures will be part of a separate project; an RFP for analyzing different court-appointed counsel service delivery models and rate structures will be issued next year. The consultant awarded the caseload standards contract will not be precluded from bidding on the service delivery RFP.

5. Could one of the results of this study be that certain activities and tasks now common in some counties would be excluded from the final standard? Who will make that decision?

That is a possible result of the study. The final decision will be made by the performance standards focus groups and the study Working Group. Note that attorneys/court systems will not be precluded from requiring additional activities/tasks above and beyond those included in the caseload standard.

6. What kinds of preliminary information can the AOC provide to the contractor: In particular:
 - a. is there a summary of providers (e.g. public defender, alternative public defender, bar association, other panel, individual appointments) and the payment terms (e.g. by hour, by task, by case,

by year) in use in each county? Is this information summarized in terms of the number of attorneys operating under each system?

Information regarding provider types, payment terms and populations will be available to the contractor prior to the onset of the project. At the request of several prospective bidders, preliminary information outlining provider types and populations is provided as an attachment to this document.

- b. is information available concerning the extent of the use of case-related subcontractors, such as attorney-affiliated social workers, paralegals, investigators and secretarial staffing?

No, not in any uniform, fashion. The AOC has this information available only for those court systems that have submitted particular budget requests in this area.

- c. has the initial activities/tasks outline by AOC staff discussed in the RFP been completed and can it be made available to bidders?

The outline is partially completed and is provided in draft form to bidders as an attachment to this document.

- 7. For Project Component #1, developing attorney performance standards, does the AOC expect that consensus will be reached among each set of focus group participants regarding the requisite case activities and tasks to be included in the standards? Will the consultant be expected to analyze and consolidate the results of the six different focus groups to develop a single set of standards?

No, the AOC does not expect that consensus will be reached. Yes, the consultant will be expected to consolidate the results of the six different focus groups to develop a single set of standards.

- 8. For Project Component #2, will there be any statewide incentives in place from the AOC to encourage full participation in the workload study? If not, is this a possibility?

There will be no monetary incentives in place, and fiscal incentives are not a possibility. All dependency counsel in the state will get a letter from the Chief Justice requesting their participation; AOC staff will work with each court system to ensure that participation in the study is part of court-appointed counsel contracts negotiated prior to the workload study period.

For those contracts that will not be negotiated prior to the workload study, participation will be used as a factor by the courts in any contract renewal negotiations. The AOC provides 100% funding for court-appointed counsel in juvenile dependency proceedings statewide. It is the hope that as this relationship is more clearly articulated to dependency counsel, they will be increasingly willing to participate in the study.

9. Does the AOC have an acceptable workload study response rate if a 100% response rate is not achieved?

No. The purpose behind the 100% response rate target is to ensure that the wide variability among individual practitioners in this area is reflected in the workload study results.

10. Is the AOC open to conducting the workload study for more than two weeks or for multiple two week periods to address possible under-representation of certain smaller, low case volume counties and to ensure the highest possible response rate?

Yes.

11. What assumptions can be made about baseline technology available to all workload study participants to facilitate workload study communications?

Word processing and telephone capabilities.

12. Can you elaborate on assumptions about the impact on attorney time of social workers, paralegals, court appointed special advocates, etc? Is there an assumption that there may be differences in the amount of time attorneys spend in some jurisdictions on administrative matters involving these other parties? Is there a reason this may be more prevalent in some counties than in others?

The assumption is that the availability of support staff will allow an attorney to carry more cases. We are assuming that line attorneys are not responsible for managing these support personnel. Attorney utilization of support staff is based upon localized decisions about how best to allocate resources between legal and non-legal staffing.

13. Regarding Project Component #4, Caseload Standard Identification, can you elaborate on what is expected of the consultant in terms of identifying the fiscal and practice implications of the caseload standards? Are these

analyses to be accomplished independently by the consultant or collaboratively with AOC staff?

Project Component #4 will involve an analysis of the impact of the adoption of the caseload standards on a county-by-county basis, i.e. exactly what it will cost in county x to implement the standard, and what exactly will have to change about attorney practice in that county? This component will be completed in conjunction with AOC staff.

14. Should the fiscal impacts address cost increases or decreases that would result from statewide implementation of the standards? Should the consultant assume that the current configuration of providers (public vs. private, paid by the case versus paid by the year, etc.) will remain in place after the new standards are adopted?

The fiscal impact analysis should address cost increases or decreases that would result from implementation of the standards. The consultant should assume that the current configuration and rate structures will remain in place after the new standards are adopted for the purposes of this Project Component.

MGT of America

1. Page 3, (Item 2) describes the workload study. What kind of leverage does the Judicial Council or the AOC have over attorneys who do not respond to the contractor or choose not to participate in the study?

The AOC provides 100% funding for court-appointed counsel in dependency proceedings. Leverage will be exerted by stressing this relationship, and by AOC staff working with each local court system directly responsible for negotiating counsel contracts to ensure that participation in the study is required as part of contract compliance.

2. Page 3 (Item 1) and Page 5 (Item 3) refer to conducting a pilot focus group. Is the pilot focus group considered one of the six statewide focus groups?

No.

3. Page 4, (Item A) states that the response to the workload study component must address how to achieve a satisfactory response rate from the state's approximately 800 dependency counsel providers. Page 5 (Item D) states that the response to the workload study component must address the

logistical considerations of collecting a 100 percent censuses over a two-week period. Could you clarify the difference between these 2 requirements?

These were not intended to be 2 different requirements. The intent behind the 100% response rate is to ensure that the wide variability in provider types and services is captured for each trial court system/county in the state.

4. Page 6, (Item 4.2.1) states all proposals must be submitted with an original and 10 copies. Following paragraph states that we must submit six copies of the bid proposals. Is the bid proposal intended to be a separate document? If yes, is it item 4.4? If no, could you provide additional information describing the “bid proposal”?

The bid proposal is not intended to be a separate document. Only six copies of the proposals are required. Disregard the statement referencing 10 copies.

National Center for State Courts

1. Has the due date for proposals changed from the original January 8, 2002 date?

Yes, the due date is now January 15, 2002.

2. Is there a centralized database with contact information for the approximately 800 dependency counsel providers?

AOC staff is currently developing such a database in Access.

3. Can you provide an overview of the nature of the information that is available on dependency caseloads statewide and its availability to the contractor? For instance what level of detail is available on the number and type of events that occur in the processing of a dependency or termination of parental rights case?

Information universally available from the trial courts is limited to numbers of dependency filings. Once the Judicial Branch Statistical Information System (JBSIS) is fully implemented by trial courts throughout the state, a high level of detail will be available with respect to the number and type of events occurring on each dependency case in the state. Currently, information on the population of children statewide, and at the county level, in each stage of a dependency proceeding is available through the

State Department of Social Services. Stages are broken up by events, which are typically hearings. State DSS data may be one to two years old. The availability of more current DSS data is being explored by AOC staff.

National Council on Crime and Delinquency

The National Council on Crime and Delinquency submitted a request that the solicitation document (the RFP) be changed as follows:

First, we suggest changing the role of the “Time Setting Focus Groups” from assigning time to activities and tasks to reviewing results of the workload study. Their change would include:

- Assisting in interpreting results;
- Clarifying reasons for regional or urban/rural differences;
- Clarifying reasons for differences reported by case type and/or decision point;
- Addressing other issues that emerge during data analyses.

This change is recommended because: 1) estimates garnered from a series of focus groups are likely to vary substantially (in recent study of social services in California, different focus groups produced such variance in time estimates that results were, in our opinion, of little real value); 2) focus group estimates often are highly inaccurate and therefore only confuse and complicate interpretation of results obtained from a well-designed workload study; and 3) limiting responsibilities of the focus group to review of results should free up resources that could be used to strengthen the actual workload study and produce more defensible results.

In essence, the proposed number of focus groups could be reduced from six to two or three. The original role of these focus groups, we think, unnecessarily complicates the project without producing the requisite advantages. As currently designed, the project requires reconciling results of six focus groups, each of which follows two separate tracks in setting time requirements. These results will, in turn, need to be reconciled with the findings from the workload study. As noted earlier, there may well be tremendous disparity, which could undermine the credibility of the entire effort.

We further suggest these resources saved by reducing the role of these focus groups be used to help fund changes in the workload design. The following revisions are suggested:

- Employ a case selection methodology that identifies and includes cases at various points in the court process.
- Study a stratified sample of attorneys rather than the universe, ensuring adequate representation of various areas of California. Sampling attorneys permits more resources to be devoted to training, monitoring and oversight to ensure integrity of the data collected.
- Extend the study period from two weeks to a minimum of four weeks. In fact it may be wise to consider using different time frames for different case types and/or decision points. Given the range in case complexity, we have serious reservations about the ability of a two-week study period to produce accurate data on time required to provide effective counsel at various decision points. Furthermore, the extended time frame will help inform the standard setting effort by identifying the frequency at which events/contacts occur.

If the study is designed to record data on specifically identified cases over a period of time it will not be too onerous for those attorneys in the study and will produce results that are both easy to interpret and to defend as a basis for establishing caseload standards.

*With respect to suggestions regarding revisions to the Time Setting Focus Groups: It is important to clarify that **the purpose of the workload study component is not to identify requisite attorney time per activity/task and thus to provide the basis for the caseload standard.** The purpose of the workload study is to provide baseline data regarding current attorney practice. The baseline data will then inform the analysis of the impact of applying the caseload standards as developed. Thus, the intended purpose of the Time Setting Focus Groups is a necessary one – to identify the amount of attorney time required per activity/task.*

With respect to the employment of a case selection methodology and sampling, these are not precluded from consideration as part of a bid proposal. An inherent difficulty to employing a case selection methodology is the lack of complete information about the number and type of cases that particular attorneys are carrying in each court system statewide. With regards to sampling, an approach that can ensure adequate representation of the unique practices of attorneys operating in each county in the state would be considered.

Extension of the workload study timeframe would be acceptable.

NewPoint Group

1. Can we bid a schedule of 12 months to complete all work following official contract approval? (The RFP states that the work will be done between January and December 2002, but it also states that it may take 6 to 8 weeks after a contractor is selected sometime after January 8th – to process a contract, which probably would put the official start date into March).

Yes, you can bid a twelve month schedule from contract approval.

2. Will the AOC make copies of the documents listed in Paragraph 1.2, page 1, available at the Bidders' Conference?

No, these documents are available from various on-line sources.

3. Is the AOC open to alternative technical approaches to completing the study or must the proposals all bid the approach as defined in the RFP? If your response is that all bidders must bid the RFP approach, can a proposal bid that approach plus an alternative approach, citing the differences in costs for each?

The AOC is open to alternative technical approaches. The only requirements are that there is a focus group component that garners involvement of practitioners and juvenile court judicial officers, and that there is a time study component.

4. Does the AOC have preliminary thoughts about how it will want to reconcile the results of the two sets of Time Setting Focus Groups for subsequent use in establishing the caseload standards?

No. It may be that the final product is a set of "best" and "optimal" practices as reflected by varying time standards.

5. Section 3.2 A, page 4, requires that the impact on attorney time of various non-attorney classifications be defined (i.e. attorney-affiliated private social workers; investigative, paralegal, and secretarial staffing; and Court-Appointed Special Advocates). However, there does not seem to be any planned representation of these classes in either the Performance Standard or Workload Study phases. Is it the AOC's intention that the contractor rely solely on the views of attorneys and judges/justices to determine this impact?

The impact on attorney time of the availability of support staffing will be determined by identifying whether or not and which type of support staffing is available to an attorney on each case worked on during the Workload Study component, and then analyzing across cases how (if at all) the availability of such staff impacts the amount of time attorneys spend on particular activities/tasks. Support personnel are not part of the Performance Standard Development process as the AOC is not seeking their input as to requisite attorney activities/tasks; the time of support personnel will not be independently measured during the Workload Study phase as only the impact of their assignment to a particular case on attorney time spent is important to the caseload study analysis.

6. With reference to question No. 5 above, given the widely varying availability of non-attorney, para-professional help among the 58 counties, does the AOC anticipate that caseload standards will have to be developed for attorneys working with and without various types of support personnel?

Yes.

7. Regarding Section 3.2.A, page 4, what does the AOC consider a “satisfactory response rate” from the state’s 800 dependency counsel (i.e. what percentage would be satisfactory)? Also, how does this aspect of the RFP relate to section 3.2.D, page 5, which requires “...collecting a 100 percent census over a two-week period.....?”

There was no intended distinction between a “satisfactory response rate” and a 100 percent census. The intent behind the 100 percent census requirement is that the diverse array of court-appointed counsel practices from court system to court system be reflected in study results.

8. Does the AOC have a list of all 800 dependency counsel providers with addresses, phones, email addresses, etc.? If so, is the list in electronic format? If not, will you provide some guidance as to how all of these attorneys can be identified?

The AOC will provide the contractor with such a list upon contract award.

9. Does the AOC know how many dependency counsel “organizations” exist statewide (re. Section 3.2.C, page 4)

Not at this time. Preliminary information is provided as an attachment to this document.

10. Will the AOC distribute the study documents to the approximately 150 participants in six focus groups, and the 800 or so workload study participants?

The contractor will be responsible for distributing all workload study materials.

11. The RFP states that the AOC will be responsible for “securing focus group locations” for the performance standards development and time setting task”. Does this mean that the AOC will pay for meeting room costs, including refreshments and lunches for participants? Will the AOC also pay for travel and other necessary out-of-pocket costs (e.g. overnight hotel for participants from remote locations) for the many people involved in these meetings and others that may be necessary?

The AOC will cover all costs associated with focus group participation other than those incurred directly by the contractor (i.e the contractor’s travel and lodging).

12. Why must the proposals be double-spaced as stated in Section 4.2.1, page 6? Does this apply also to resumes and descriptions of previous engagements?

Disregard the double-space language.

13. How many copies of the proposal are needed, an original and 10 copies, or just 6 copies (see Section 4.2.1 on page 6).

Six copies are needed.

14. The RFP indicates two different methods of payment: cost reimbursement (see Section 4.4 on page 7) and upon completion of tasks with withholds (Section N, Item No. 2 on page 15). Please clarify.

The method of payment will be cost reimbursement.

Policy Study, Inc.

1. What is the minimum and maximum number of juvenile dependency cases that attorneys handle now?

This information is not currently available other than on a purely anecdotal basis, and is of course dependent upon whether or not an attorney is doing dependency work full or part-time.

2. Please provide a breakdown of court-appointed attorneys by the size of the law firm in which they work.

This information is not currently uniformly available. See the attached attorney listing which reflects preliminary information on the dependency attorney population.

3. Over the 2-week measurement period for the time logs, are there attorneys who may not have any juvenile dependency cases?

Yes.

4. Does the State intend to move toward a single organization structure? A single fee structure? If yes, what is the preferred organizational structure and fee structure?

An analysis of potential changes to court-appointed counsel service delivery models, organizational and fee structures will be conducted as part of a separate study.

5. Section 3.2A asks that the proposer indicate how they will get a “satisfactory” response rate from the 800 dependency counsel for the workload study. Section 3.2D asks how the proposer will get a 100 percent census of the attorneys. Does the State expect the contractor to get a 100 percent response rate to the workload study?

Yes. The AOC expects the contractor to get a response rate that will reflect the wide variations in practice both between court systems/counties and individual providers.

6. What is the composition of the “Study Working Group” referred to in the solicitation?

The Study Working Group is comprised of juvenile court judicial officers, dependency counsel, a representative from the State Department of Social Services, a representative from the State County Counsels’ Association, a representative from the County Welfare Directors’ Association, a representative from a foster youth advocacy organization, a former foster youth, and State Bar representatives.

7. How many of the 800 dependency counsel cannot be contacted via e-mail?

This information is not available.

8. The RFP says that AOC staff will be responsible for selecting focus group locations. Does this also mean that the AOC will pay whatever costs are required to use those facilities?

Yes.

9. Can we assume that any meetings between the contractor and AOC staff and the Study Working Group will take place in San Francisco?

Yes.

RAND

1. Can the workload study be a random sample versus contacting all of the state's dependency counsel providers? Is there a list of all the providers or will we have to generate this list? What specific responsibilities will the consulting firm have to train personnel to respond to the workload study?

A 100% sample for the Workload Study component has been identified in the solicitation document in an effort to stress the importance of capturing information on counsel practice from the wide array of practitioners in each county in the state. Not only does practice vary from county to county, but also from provider to provider within each county. Bidders may propose some sort of sampling methodology, understanding that the goal of the workload study is to capture baseline time "spent" information from the wide array of court-appointed counsel in each county in the state.

The AOC will generate the list of providers.

Specific training responsibilities include any activities necessary to ensure that attorneys who will be required to complete the workload study forms know how to do so. In addition, the contractor will be required to provide technical assistance to attorneys during the

workload study period and to carefully monitor attorney participation as the workload study is being conducted.

2. What motivates AOC's interest in workload standards? Is generation of specific standards a required output of this project?

There are two distinct and equally important issues driving the need to develop standards in this area. On the fiscal side, the credibility of court-appointed counsel budget requests with the state Department of Finance and the Legislature is jeopardized by the lack of a clear understanding of what the state is paying for when allocating money to address court-appointed counsel costs. The other issue to be addressed by the development of caseload standards is the need to ensure uniform quality legal services for both parents and children subject to the state's dependency adjudication process in all court systems throughout the state.

Specific standards are a required output of the project.

3. Are there data available on dependency court outcomes? Could we talk to clients and/or judges in an effort to calibrate the efficacy of the representation they are provided? Is there a computerized database of cases that can inform this investigation?

There is no data available on dependency court outcomes with respect to attorney performance. There is outcome data available more generally with respect to children in foster care. Judicial involvement has already been identified as a key component of the Performance Standard Development focus groups; a bidder is not precluded from proposing client contact.

The only computerized database of cases is the information maintained by the State Department of Social Service on every child for whom there is an open dependency case.

4. What are the privacy parameters of this project? Can we confidentially access case-specific information? In the workload study, can respondents identify specific cases?

It is assumed that both attorneys and clients will be coded for purposes of the study analysis. Additional legal considerations are being assessed by the Study Working Group. The contractor will not be responsible for identifying legal issues with respect to privacy considerations.

5. The RFP states that the AOC will secure locations and recruit all of the focus group participants (attorneys, judicial officers, appellate court justices). What it doesn't mention is anything about compensation for these folks. Are they recruiting these folks with the understanding that they will be paid to attend? (We normally pay focus group attendees) If so, should we assume that we are paying them? And what amount might they be telling the folks they will be paid?

Focus group attendees will not be paid.

6. Will Contractor be permitted to publish research findings?

Yes.

Rita Kidd Consulting, Inc.

1. The RFP has not identified a requirement within the scope of work for surveying the 58 counties to gain insight into the extent of the variability of provider types, fee structures and local practice standards. This information would seem to have a direct bearing on the structure of and approach to the focus groups. Has this information already been surveyed and documented by the state?

AOC staff is gathering this information and will have it available to the contractor prior to the project's start date.

2. If it has not been surveyed and documented in preparation for this project, will the State reject a proposal that includes such a step?

No.

3. Is there leeway for the consulting team to be a participant in development of the Activities/Tasks outline to be used as a basis for focus group discussions?

The consulting team will be asked to review the Activities/Tasks outline to determine its feasibility as the basis for the workload study instrument/s. The consulting team will not provide substantive input as to the activities/tasks themselves.

4. Was the number of six focus groups statewide determined based on six appellate court districts, or assumed geographical divisions, or based on

an assumption that focus group participants could be logically divided on some other basis into this number? If so, on what basis?

The number of six focus groups was derived based on the assumption that one focus group will take place in Los Angeles, one in a large Northern California county, and two additional meetings each in Southern and Northern California. Bidders may propose an alternative number of focus groups.

5. If there are extraordinary or unexpected issues that are identified during any of the four project components, has the State determined in advance how these issues will be addressed by the State/consultant partners?

Extraordinary issues will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

6. Is there a current report of the number of current and on-going cases per year per county in order to project whether some may be too small to provide a valid statistical base for the workload study?

There are current reports available identifying the number of dependency filings in each county and the number of children in foster care in each county.

7. Has a survey been completed by the State of the technology environment for each of the 58 counties and their dependency attorneys?

No.

8. Consultant Services Item 2C on Page 4 appears to imply a training for trainers approach to preparing dependency attorneys for the workload study time reporting component. Is this the State's expectation?

Yes, where practicable. Solo practitioners will have to be trained individually.

9. Has multi-year funding for this project been earmarked and secured?

Yes.

10. Does the Judicial Council already have an established relationship with any consulting firm(s) skilled in this area?

No.

William M. Mercer

1. Is sampling acceptable (for selecting both focus groups and workload study participants? Or do you expect us to solicit input from all 800 dependency counsel provides for the workload study? (See Item D. at top of page 5 which mentions a “100 percent census”)

Sampling is acceptable for identifying focus group participants. A 100% sample for the Workload Study component has been identified in the solicitation document in an effort to stress the importance of capturing information on counsel practice from the wide array of practitioners in each county in the state. Not only does practice vary from county to county, but also from provider to provider within each county. Bidders may propose some sort of sampling methodology, understanding that the goal of the workload study is to capture baseline time “spent” information from the wide array of court-appointed counsel in each county in the state.

2. Also, what inducements/incentives will the State provide to get attorneys to actually document their time/activities? Is there an expectation that study funds should be used to pay a stipend to attorneys? Does Section 4.3.5 give us a “wide opening” to get their involvement?)

Attorneys will not be paid to participate in the study. The AOC provides 100% funding for court-appointed counsel in dependency proceedings. Leverage will be exerted by stressing this relationship, and by AOC staff working with each local court system directly responsible for negotiating counsel contracts to ensure that participation in the study is required as part of contract compliance.

Furthermore, the outcome of this project is most likely to improve the often onerous working conditions under which many of these attorneys practice. AOC staff will be responsible for working with the attorneys at issue to ensure that they understand the benefits to be garnered from the successful completion of this study.

3. Can focus groups be comprised of 10 to 12 participants (rather than 25)? Is there a total number of participants required (i.e., 150) or can we use sampling to determine the number?

The answer to both questions is yes. However, if focus groups are limited to 10 to 12 participants there will most likely need to be more than six focus groups.

4. On page 6, we are asked for an original and 10 copies with six signed copies. Is it correct that you want a signed original, five signed copies? And four unsigned copies? (Why not 11 signed copies total?)

Six copies are required.

5. Can you provide a copy of the State of CA Standard Agreement Form (per page 7) for our review?

Provided as an attachment to this document.

6. How much latitude do we have in designing the project to meet the Judicial Council's needs?

The bidder has a great deal of latitude in designing the project. The project design must include a focus group component involving dependency counsel and juvenile court judicial officers and a time study component which will enable the identification of current attorney time spent per activity/task.

7. Will questions and answers from potential bidders be published on a website following the Bidders' Conference?

Yes, www.courtinfo.ca.gov.

Walter R. McDonald & Associates

1. For the twelve focus groups, and any other events which may require attendance by attorneys, who is responsible for expenses such as participant travel, "salaries" and accommodations?

The AOC will be responsible for all such costs other than those incurred by the consultant.

2. How will JCC assure appointed counsel participation in the various aspects of the project?

The AOC provides 100% funding for court-appointed counsel in dependency proceedings. Leverage will be exerted by stressing this relationship, and by AOC staff working with each local court system

directly responsible for negotiating counsel contracts to ensure that participation in the study is required as part of contract compliance.

Furthermore, the outcome of this project is most likely to improve the often onerous working conditions under which many of these attorneys practice. AOC staff will be responsible for working with the attorneys at issue to ensure that they understand the benefits to be garnered from the successful completion of this study.