

**Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Rules
CONCEPT PROPOSAL**

Enclosure C

Vendor and vendor number	AbilityFirst #HX0200
Primary regional center	South Central Los Angeles Regional Center
Service type and code	Rehab Work Activity Program #954
Number of consumers currently serving	80
Barriers to compliance with the HCBS rules and/or project implementation	<p>One of the main tenets of the HCBS rules is the importance of person-centered planning and the concept that the program is designed around the needs, preferences, goals, and community of the individual. In the current design and structure of the Work Activity Program (WAP), program participants must fit in to the program that already exists. While goals and outcomes are specific to the individual, they are still limited to the overall all framework of the WAP in terms of the type of work that is performed, the hours of operation, where the program takes place. Because of this long-standing structure, one in which a large number of individuals are served at one physical location in a pre-determined program structure, we must shift the institutional mindset and overall approach to programming of our staff, our clients and their families.</p> <p>Another significant barrier is that the new models will require lower staff ratios yet we already have great difficulty recruiting and retaining high qualified staff. The unprecedented increase in minimum wage in our service area will undoubtedly exacerbate this problem, which stems from an inadequate reimbursement structure that does not fully cover the cost of providing services. We also know, based on our preliminary conversations with program participants and their families/caregivers, there is significant resistance to changing how the program currently operates.</p>
Narrative/description of the project. Identify which HCBS federal requirements are currently out of compliance; include justification for funding request	<p>Throughout its 90-year history, AbilityFirst has continually looked ahead to identify new opportunities to help individuals with disabilities realize their full potential. The agency pioneered some of the very first community services in California for children with disabilities. Over time, programs expanded to provide services for adults as well as children, and to reach individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities as well as physical challenges. Our programs have historically been carried out in community-based locations. The new HCBS Rules compel us to accelerate our transition from this structured, site-based programming (especially in the work centers) to tailor programming to focus on the specific needs, preferences, goals, and aspirations of each individual we serve. This transition will bring a major change in the way AbilityFirst operates, and touch every interaction by and among participants, families/caregivers, staff, board members, volunteers and the</p>

	<p>communities at large.</p> <p>We are requesting HCBS compliance funding for organizational change support and training based on the concepts and practice of <u>person-centered planning, individual choice, and community integration</u>. As noted above, the need to reduce the staffing ratio (and securing a rate structure to support those ratios) is a very significant barrier to HCBS compliance. However, before we address the program and staffing model, it is critical that we dramatically shift the attitudes and concepts underlying our current model to effectively and fully implement programming that is truly person-centered. Based on our Provider Compliance Evaluation (Enclosure B), the program is not in compliance with Federal Requirements #1, 2, and 4.</p> <p>The project will utilize an outside expert to provide assessment and training to help us change our organizational philosophy from one of care and supervision to one of empowering and enabling through person-centered planning. The project is part of an organization-wide process to implement the new regulations and approach. This includes personalizing our focus to incorporate participant control rather than program structure. The project consists of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessment of current AbilityFirst programs and structures/overview; 2. Overall recommendations – how to support a more person-centered approach (staffing, intake process, etc.), and developing person-centered programming reflecting individual choice, personal rights, and opportunities for community integration; 3. Training on person-centered approach and shifting our organizational mindset, to be offered in multiple sessions to AbilityFirst participants, families/caregivers, staff, and board members; and 4. "Train the Trainer" sessions for key program staff, to ensure continuity of the message for new stakeholders and employees. <p>For this program, we are also requesting funding for a <u>dedicated job developer</u> to help participants successfully transition into community employment. With current staffing ratios and reimbursement rates, we do not otherwise have the resources to devote to this urgent need.</p>
Estimated budget; identify all major costs and benchmarks—attachments are	<p>Training for all staff members (as part of agency-wide initiative), to be conducted by December 31, 2017, and pro-rata share of total project costs (20%) = \$10,587</p> <p>Dedicated job developer (first year salary and benefits), to be</p>

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acceptable	employed by December 2017 = \$56,250
Requested funding for 2016-17	\$66,837
Estimated timeline for the project	June 2017 – December 2017