



**STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF DISABILITY AND AGING**

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

**FOR  
FOR  
TN START RESOURCE CENTERS**

**RFI # 34401-99480  
April 21, 2025**

**1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:**

The State of Tennessee, Department of Disability and Aging issues this Request for Information ("RFI") for the purpose of collection information for an upcoming solicitation for staff at the TN START Resource Centers in West and Middle Tennessee. We appreciate your input and participation in this process.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Tennessee START Assessment and Stabilization Teams ("TN START AST") are a statewide resource for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities ("IDD") who have complex behavioral and/or mental health needs provided by the Department for Disability and Aging and the National Center for START Services. START (Systematic, Therapeutic, Assessment, Resources & Treatment) is a comprehensive model of service supports that optimizes independence, treatment, and community living for people with IDD and behavioral health needs. Therapeutic Resource Centers are an integral part of this model as they provide a community-based, voluntary short-term therapeutic setting for people who experience the need for an out-of-home placement for stabilization but do not require in-patient hospitalization. These placements are utilized not only when a person is in distress, but also when the person and their support team are anticipating and hoping to prevent these stressful experiences. As admissions will be accepted weekdays from 8 am to 4:30 pm. The START model provides therapeutic exercises, outcome focused activities, and meaningful positive experiences in the home and the community.

**2. COMMUNICATIONS:**

2.1. Please submit your response to this RFI to:

Eli Rousey | Contracts and Grants Director  
UBS Bldg. 8th Floor  
315 Deaderick Street, Nashville, TN 37243  
615-804-2669  
[Eli.T.Rousey@tn.gov](mailto:Eli.T.Rousey@tn.gov)

Please feel free to contact the Department of Disability and Aging with any questions regarding this RFI. The main point of contact will be:

Eli Rousey | Contracts and Grants Director  
UBS Bldg. 8th Floor  
315 Deaderick Street, Nashville, TN 37243  
615-804-2669  
Eli.T.Rousey@tn.gov

2.2. Please reference RFI # # **34401-99480** with all communications to this RFI.

**3. RFI SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:**

EVENT		TIME (Central Time Zone)	DATE (all dates are State business days)
1.	RFI Issued		April 21, 2025
2.	RFI Response Deadline		April 30, 2025

**4. GENERAL INFORMATION:**

- 4.1. Please note that responding to this RFI is not a prerequisite for responding to any future solicitations related to this project and a response to this RFI will not create any contract rights. Responses to this RFI will become property of the State.
- 4.2. The information gathered during this RFI is part of an ongoing procurement. In order to prevent an unfair advantage among potential respondents, the RFI responses will not be available until after the completion of evaluation of any responses, proposals, or bids resulting from a Request for Qualifications, Request for Proposals, Invitation to Bid or other procurement method. In the event that the state chooses not to go further in the procurement process and responses are never evaluated, the responses to the procurement including the responses to the RFI, will be considered confidential by the State.
- 4.3. The State will not pay for any costs associated with responding to this RFI.

**5. INFORMATIONAL FORMS:**

The State is requesting the following information from all interested parties. Please fill out the following forms:

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**TECHNICAL INFORMATIONAL FORM**

1. RESPONDENT LEGAL ENTITY NAME:

2. RESPONDENT CONTACT PERSON:

Name, Title:

Address:

Phone Number:

Email:

3. Describe your agency's experience providing direct support services to individuals with co-occurring mental health and intellectual/developmental disabilities or those individuals with more complex needs.

4. What experience does your agency have in providing respite services?

5. How does your agency ensure DSPs are implementing pre-determined schedules, therapy plans, scheduled activities, etc.?

6. What is your typical staff-to-individual ratio for both daytime and overnight hours?

7. How do you ensure timely deployment of DSPs in urgent or emergency situations? This can include not only emergency behavioral or medical situations, but also changes in schedules that may require more staffing to keep prior commitments.

8. What is your average response time for staffing an urgent respite situation?

9. How does your agency provide transportation to community activities? How does your agency address last minute schedule changes that involve transportation?

10. How would you handle situations where your team is concerned about safety or appropriateness of a placement?

11. What experience does your agency have in providing services in highly-structured settings?

12. Are you able to provide overnight or 24-hour support, and if so, how is coverage ensured

and supervised? Please include the provision of more staff for emergencies.
13. What role do you believe your agency should play in admission decisions for individuals referred to respite care?

<b>COST INFORMATIONAL FORM</b>
1. Describe what pricing units you typically utilize for similar services or goods (e.g., per hour, each, etc.):
2. Describe the typical price range for similar services or goods

<b>ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>
1. Please provide input on alternative approaches or additional things to consider that might benefit the State: