

EASTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY –
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Mental Health Consultant Services for Early Head Start & Head Start
RFP # 2026-27-01

Issue Date: 05/20/2026
Clarifying Questions Due: 06/05/2026
Closing / Submission Date: 06/12/2026 (PST)

ISSUING OFFICE / POINT OF CONTACT

Robert Kleng, Director
Eastern Oregon University Head Start – Office of Head Start
One University Blvd
La Grande, OR 97850

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INTRODUCTION

Eastern Oregon University Head Start (EOUHS) is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to contract with a licensed Mental Health Consultant to support our Early Head Start and Head Start programs during the 2026–2027 program year.

EOUHS serves children ages 0–5 and their families across rural Eastern Oregon. Our mission is to foster school readiness by supporting the growth and development of children through high-quality, family-centered services.

The selected consultant will provide program-wide mental health consultation, staff training, family engagement support, and consultation regarding children’s individual needs in alignment with the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), including but not limited to 45 CFR §1302.45 related to child mental health and social-emotional well-being.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Eastern Oregon University Head Start is a comprehensive early learning program providing:

- Head Start preschool services for children ages 3–5
- Early Head Start services for pregnant women, infants, and toddlers
- Family services and case management
- Health, nutrition, and disability supports

EOUHS is an integral part of Eastern Oregon University, Oregon’s Rural University, committed to serving rural communities with diverse cultural, socioeconomic, and geographic needs. EOUHS currently provides services across Union, Baker, and surrounding Eastern Oregon counties through center-based and home-based programming. Consultants should anticipate regular travel between program locations, including remote rural communities.

CONTRACT TERM AND RENEWAL

The initial contract term is anticipated to begin July 1, 2026 and continue through June 30, 2027.

EOU reserves the right to renew the contract for up to four (4) additional one-year terms based upon:

- Satisfactory contractor performance
- Continued program need
- Availability of funding
- Mutual agreement between EOU and the contractor

Renewal decisions will be evaluated annually based on contractor responsiveness, service quality, documentation compliance, training effectiveness, collaboration with EOUHS staff and families, and overall program alignment.

SOLICITATION PROCEDURES

This RFP will become part of the Contract between EOU and the selected contractor(s). The contractor(s) will be bound to perform according to the terms of this RFP, their Proposal(s), and EOU's terms and conditions.

General RFP provisions and EOU's General Terms and Conditions are available at:

<https://www.eou.edu/busserv/>

It is the proposer's responsibility to review all applicable provisions and terms prior to submitting a response.

EOU reserves the right to:
Reject any or all proposals

- Request additional information or clarification from proposers
- Modify the scope of work
- Conduct interviews with finalists
- Contact references provided by proposers
- Request revised proposals
- Award the contract in the best interest of EOUHS
- Decline to award a contract

Selection will be based on the overall best value to EOUHS, taking into consideration qualifications, relevant experience, program alignment, continuity of service, responsiveness, and cost.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

All proposals must be received on or before the Closing / Submission Date listed above.

Submission Method:

Electronic submission via email. Attach one original proposal response (PDF preferred).

Point of Contact:

Robert Kleng
EOUHS Director
rkleng@eou.edu
541-786-9025

Email Subject Line:

“Response to RFP #2026-27-01 – Mental Health Consultant”

Late proposals may be rejected at EOU’s sole discretion.

Proposals are subject to Public Records requests. Proposals are deemed confidential until the “Notice of Intent to Award” is issued. If a Proposal contains any information that is considered a TRADE SECRET under ORS 192.501(2), SUCH INFORMATION MUST BE LISTED ON A SEPARATE SHEET CAPABLE OF SEPARATION FROM THE REMAINING PROPOSAL AND MUST BE CLEARLY MARKED WITH THE FOLLOWING LEGEND: “This information constitutes a trade secret under ORS 192.501(2), and shall not be disclosed except in accordance with the Oregon Public Records Law, ORS Chapter 192.”
ISSUING OFFICE

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- Issue Date: 05/20/2026
- Clarifying Questions Due: 06/05/2026
- Closing / Submission Date: 06/12/2026
- Anticipated Award Date: 06/24/2026
- Anticipated Contract Start Date: 07/01/2026

Proposal Format

Proposals should be organized in the following order:

1. Letter of Interest

2. Qualifications and Experience
3. Responses to Required Questions
4. Sample Annual Work Plan
5. Fee Proposal
6. References
7. Required Certifications and Documentation

The recommended maximum proposal length is 15 pages, excluding attachments.

Proposal Requirements

Proposals must include the following components:

- Letter of Interest
- Resume or Curriculum Vitae
- Sample Annual Work Plan
- Detailed Fee Proposal, inclusive of travel and incidental expenses
- Three Professional References
- Proof of Oregon Licensure/Certification
- Federal Tax ID Number
- Secretary of State Business Registry Number (or an explanation if exempt)

Fee Proposal Requirements

Fee proposals should clearly identify the following:

- Hourly consultation rates
- Training and facilitation rates
- Coaching rates
- Travel and mileage costs
- Virtual consultation rates, if different
- Administrative and report-writing rates, if applicable
- Any additional reimbursable expenses

Proposers should also provide estimated annual costs based on approximately 750 annual service hours.

Insurance Requirements

Prior to contract execution, the selected contractor shall provide certificates of insurance demonstrating the following minimum coverage levels:

- **Commercial General Liability:**
\$1,000,000 per occurrence / \$2,000,000 aggregate
- **Professional Liability (Errors & Omissions):**
\$1,000,000 per claim
- **Automobile Liability (if applicable):**
\$1,000,000 combined single limit
- **Workers' Compensation:**
Statutory Oregon requirements

EOUHS reserves the right to require additional insurance coverage as deemed appropriate.

SCOPE OF WORK

The Consultant shall provide services that include, but are not limited to:

- Consult with EOUHS leadership regarding development of annual mental health service plans, policies, procedures, and educational materials. EOUHS anticipates approximately 750 consulting hours annually
- Conduct classroom observations in all assigned centers and classrooms at a frequency determined collaboratively with EOUHS leadership based on program need.
- Provide mental health consultation to families upon request, including referral support and resource navigation.
- Deliver a minimum of three staff trainings annually related to:
 - Child mental health
 - Trauma-informed care
 - Conscious Discipline implementation
 - Emergent behavioral and social-emotional topics
- Support teachers, home visitors, and family advocates in implementing

positive behavior supports and classroom management strategies.

- Integrate and model practices from Conscious Discipline, EOUHS's evidence-based social emotional and behavior intervention framework.
- Collaborate with EOUHS Education Mentor staff to support New Hire Training focused on:
 - Social-emotional development
 - Trauma-informed practice
 - Conscious Discipline implementation
- Provide classroom- and center-level coaching, as assigned by the EOUHS Education Director.
- Collaborate with Inclusion Services staff, practice-based coaches, and community partners regarding children with behavioral or developmental concerns.
- Provide consultation and educational opportunities to families regarding parenting, mental health, and social-emotional wellness.
- Maintain documentation of consultations and interventions in ChildPlus or other designated systems.
- Provide periodic summary reports identifying trends, strengths, areas of concern, training topics, and recommendations for program improvement.
- Attend leadership meetings as requested, minimum two annually.
- Maintain responsive communication with EOUHS leadership and assigned staff regarding urgent behavioral, mental health, or classroom concerns.
- Report suspected or known child abuse and neglect in compliance with Oregon law.

Deliverables and Performance Expectations

The selected consultant shall provide measurable and documented services including, but not limited to:

- Written consultation summaries following significant classroom observations or intensive consultation activities
- Monthly activity reports summarizing consultation hours, trainings conducted, coaching activities, and identified trends or recommendations
- An annual training calendar submitted within 30 days of contract execution
- Timely response to urgent classroom or behavioral concerns within mutually agreed-upon response timelines
- Participation in annual program planning and evaluation activities
- Documentation completed in accordance with EOUHS timelines and procedures

Performance Evaluation Criteria

Consultant performance may be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Responsiveness and reliability
- Quality and timeliness of documentation
- Collaboration with staff and families
- Quality of training and coaching services
- Consistency of onsite presence
- Contribution to program-wide social-emotional support systems

ONSITE AVAILABILITY REQUIREMENTS

EOUHS serves geographically dispersed rural communities. Because of the relationship-based and coaching-intensive nature of this work, onsite availability is considered an essential component of successful service delivery.

The selected consultant must be available to provide regular onsite services within EOUHS service areas.

The following services are required to be conducted onsite:

- Classroom observations
- Classroom and center coaching
- Staff trainings
- New hire onboarding support
- Direct classroom technical assistance

Hybrid or virtual meetings may be utilized for:

- Administrative meetings
- Planning meetings
- Follow-up consultation
- Case coordination
- Leadership consultation when appropriate

Preference may be given to consultants who demonstrate the ability to maintain consistent onsite presence throughout the program year. EOUHS services are delivered across multiple rural counties and communities. Consultants should anticipate regular travel between program sites and include all anticipated travel-related costs within their fee proposal.

CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS

Required Qualifications:

- Licensed or certified mental health professional in the State of Oregon
- Minimum three years of experience working with preschool-aged children and families
- Enrolled in the Oregon Central Background Registry
- Valid Oregon driver's license
- Ability to travel regularly to multiple rural sites

Preferred Qualifications:

- Prior experience with Head Start programs
 - Expertise in Conscious Discipline implementation
 - Certified Conscious Discipline Instructor or Master Trainer designation
 - Experience providing coaching and adult learning facilitation
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STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND BACKGROUND REQUIREMENTS

The selected contractor and all staff providing onsite services to EOUHS children, families, or classrooms must adhere to all EOUHS Standards of Conduct, confidentiality requirements, and professional conduct expectations applicable to Head Start programs and university contractors.

The selected contractor shall comply with all applicable confidentiality laws and regulations, including FERPA, HIPAA when applicable, and Head Start confidentiality requirements.

The selected contractor shall ensure that all onsite staff, subcontractors, consultants, or representatives who may have contact with children or access to program facilities are actively enrolled in the Oregon Central Background Registry prior to providing services onsite.

The contractor must provide EOUHS with:

- Documentation verifying enrollment in the Oregon Central Background Registry for all onsite personnel
- Signed acknowledgment of adherence to EOUHS Standards of Conduct and applicable program policies

Failure to maintain compliance with these requirements may result in suspension or termination of the contract.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

Proposers should respond to the following prompts:

- What factors are most critical to a successful Head Start mental health consultation partnership?
 - Describe how you will integrate Conscious Discipline into training, coaching, classroom practice, and family engagement.
 - Provide a sample annual work plan that includes:
 - Trainings
 - Coaching cycles
 - Classroom observations
 - Documentation practices
 - Onsite service delivery schedule
 - Describe your approach to culturally responsive and trauma-informed care in rural communities.
 - Describe your approach to balancing onsite relationship-based work with hybrid consultation practices.
 - Provide an example (de-identified) of a report, action plan, or consultation summary you have previously developed.
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EVALUATION CRITERIA

Total Possible Points: 110

- Experience and Expertise – 25 points
 - 25 points: 5+ years working with Head Start or similar populations with strong knowledge of HSPPS
 - 15 points: 3–4 years of relevant experience with some familiarity with HSPPS
 - 5 points: Limited relevant experience
- Conscious Discipline Expertise – 20 points
 - 20 points: Certified Conscious Discipline Instructor or Master Trainer with documented implementation experience
 - 15 points: Extensive experience implementing Conscious Discipline but not certified
 - 10 points: General familiarity with Conscious Discipline
- Training and Coaching Capacity – 15 points
 - 15 points: Extensive experience leading staff training, coaching cycles, classroom consultation, and new hire onboarding
 - 10 points: Moderate experience in training or coaching
 - 5 points: Limited demonstrated experience
- Credentials and Qualifications – 15 points
 - 15 points: Meets all required qualifications
 - 0 points: Does not meet minimum qualifications
- Cost Proposal – 10 points
 - Cost proposals will be evaluated based on reasonableness, completeness, competitiveness, and alignment with proposed service capacity and qualifications.
- References – 5 points
 - 5 points: Three strong professional references provided
 - 2 points: One to two references provided
 - 0 points: No references provided
- Program Alignment & Continuity – 10 points

- 10 points: Demonstrates extensive familiarity with rural Head Start operations, relationship-based consultation, Conscious Discipline implementation, coaching systems, and continuity of service delivery within EOHS or similarly structured programs
 - 5 points: Demonstrates experience with similar rural early learning or Head Start systems
 - 0 points: Limited demonstrated alignment with program structure and service model
- Responses to Questions – 10 points
 - Scored based on completeness, specificity, measurable strategies, and demonstrated understanding of Head Start program needs
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GENERAL PROVISIONS

This RFP is subject to Eastern Oregon University's General RFP Provisions and institutional procurement requirements.

By submitting a proposal, the proposer agrees to be bound by:

- The terms of this RFP
- Their submitted proposal
- EOU's General Terms and Conditions

The successful contractor shall commence no work until:

- Insurance requirements have been satisfied
- Any protest periods have expired
- Contracts have been fully executed

EOU reserves the right to terminate the contract with written notice in accordance with university contract provisions.

All reports, training materials, and deliverables developed under this contract shall become property of EOHS.

The selected consultant shall operate as an independent contractor and not as an employee of Eastern Oregon University.

In the event of contract termination or non-renewal, the selected contractor agrees to cooperate with EOHS to support orderly transition of services, documentation, and consultation activities to minimize disruption to children, families, and staff.