

## **Request for Application**

### **Residential Services Panel**

### **Community Residential Support Services**

**RFA Released: 16 June 2025**

**Deadline for Applications: 30 July 2025**

**COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE**

## **1. This opportunity**

### **1.1. Overview**

This Request for Application (RFA) is issued by Disability Support Services (DSS), a business unit within the Ministry of Social Development (MSD).

### **1.2. What we need**

The purpose of this procurement is to engage a range of suitably qualified residential services Providers via a Residential Services Panel (the Panel). The Panel will provide Community Residential Support Services for people with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) and Physical Disabilities (PD).

The Panel will consist of suitably qualified Providers on the basis that all panel members have been approved by DSS through the procurement process as capable of delivering Community Residential Support Services and have agreed to the Contract.

### **1.3. What we don't want**

Applications from Respondents who do not have capacity, capability and / or experience in delivering Community Residential Support Services for people with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) and Physical Disabilities (PD).

### **1.4. About Disability Support Services (DSS)**

DSS is a business unit within MSD. DSS is a commissioner, funder and steward of the disability system. DSS is responsible for providing essential support to around 50,000 disabled people, tāngata whaikaha Māori and their whānau, as well as equipment and modification services for approximately 100,000 New Zealanders.

The immediate priorities for DSS are to stabilise and strengthen operations, whilst planning for a sustainable disability support system for the future. The Government commitment is to better manage cost pressures and improve consistency, fairness, and transparency of services delivered to disabled people.

### **1.5. What's important to us?**

We are looking for incumbent and new Providers of Community Residential Support Services who will:

- agree to the Contract (Appendix 2)
- meet the service specification requirement and standards (Appendix 3)

- deliver ongoing disability support and board to a disabled person 24-hours, 7 days per week at the level necessary for people to have a safe and satisfying home life
- ensure the access, experience and outcomes achieved are equitable across a range of dimensions, particularly for tāngata whaikaha Māori and Pacific disabled people and their whānau; and in rural and regional areas.

We are seeking national, or regional coverage with a clear description of what regional areas you propose to cover, and welcome collaborations and partnerships to achieve this.

### **1.6. Why should you apply?**

This is an opportunity to join a long-term agreement to deliver Community Residential Support Services that will contribute to:

- improving the experience of disabled people receiving residential support: driving service quality improvement by strengthening quality and safeguarding mechanisms.
- improving access to and appropriateness of services: ensuring disabled people can obtain the right services at the right time, irrespective of income, geography and cultural background.
- stabilising the price of residential support: creating a residential support service that is fair, consistent, transparent, and sustainable.

## 2. Key Information

### 2.1. Context

This RFA is an invitation to suitably qualified Providers to submit an Application for the Residential Services Panel. This RFA is a single stage open market procurement process.

The Panel is a list of Providers who have been approved by DSS through the procurement process as capable of delivering Community Residential Support Services for people with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) and/or Physical Disabilities (PD) and who have agreed to the Contract. There will be a common set of conditions across all Panel Providers (starting with Community Residential) ensuring consistency on obligations.

Any Respondent who agrees and meets the pre-conditions, standards, and service requirements outlined in the RFA can apply to join the Panel. This means that Providers can apply to join the Panel throughout the life of the Contract.

Definitions can be found at the end of this document. Words and phrases that have special meaning are shown by the use of capitals.

### 2.2. Timeline

The proposed timeline for the procurement is as follows.

| Activity   | Date                       |
|--|----------------------------|
| RFA released on the DSS website (and referenced on GETS)     | 16 June 2025               |
| Industry briefing (see DSS website for registration details) | Week of 30 June 2025       |
| Deadline for Provider questions                              | 15 July 2025               |
| Deadline for MSD to answer questions                         | 25 July 2025               |
| Deadline for Applications                                    | 30 July 2025               |
| Notify Respondents of outcome                                | 13 October 2025            |
| Due diligence & contract confirmation                        | August 2025 – October 2025 |
| Award of contracts   | From 31 October 2025       |
| Debrief unsuccessful Respondents                             | From 30 November 2025      |
| Contract Start Date  | 1 December 2025            |

## 2.3. How to contact us

All enquiries must be directed to the DSS Point of Contact. We will manage all external communications through this Point of Contact.

Our Point of Contact:

- **Name:** Nila Panko, Procurement and Commercial Lead, DSS
- **Email Address:** [DSS\\_commissioning@msd.govt.nz](mailto:DSS_commissioning@msd.govt.nz)

## 2.4. Documents

The following documents make up this RFA:

- Request for Application (this document)
- Appendix 1 – RFA Response Form
- Appendix 2 – Residential Services Panel Agreement and Panel Terms and Conditions (Proposed Contract)
- Appendix 3 – Draft Community Residential Services Service Specification
- Appendix 4 – Estimated Price Points

## 2.5. Industry Briefing

We will be hosting an industry briefing via a webinar on 03 July at 10:00. This briefing will provide an opportunity for DSS to take Respondents through the requirements of this RFA and for Respondents to seek any clarifications required.

Please register for this webinar here: [DSS RFA Residential Services Panel – Industry Briefing](#).

This session will be recorded and shared via the DSS website.

## 2.6. Developing and submitting your application

This RFA sets out the step-by-step process and conditions that apply to this procurement process. We encourage you to take time to read and understand the RFA and supporting documents and develop a strong understanding of our requirements.

In developing your Response to this Application, you should consider how it will be assessed. If anything is unclear or you have a question, please email our Point of Contact (Section 2.3). It is advised that you keep responses clear and concise to ensure ease of assessment. Wordcount guidance is provided in the response form.

### Checklist for Respondents

- Read this RFA and the RFA Terms.

- Read the Contract in Appendix 2 - Residential Services Panel Agreement and Panel Terms and Conditions.
- Read the service specifications in Appendix 3.
- Fill out all sections of the Response Form in Appendix 1.
- Complete and sign the declaration at the end of the Response Form.
- Submit your application electronically, including completed Response Form by the deadline to the email address set out in 2.6 below.

## **2.7. Address for submitting your application**

Applications must be submitted electronically in PDF format by email to [dss\\_commissioning@msd.govt.nz](mailto:dss_commissioning@msd.govt.nz).

Please include the subject line “Residential RFA Response – [Provider name]” in the email.

We will not accept Applications via any other method unless previously agreed with the Point of Contact (Section 2.3).

### 3. Requirements

#### 3.1. Context

DSS purchases Community Residential Support Services for disabled people who require a high level of support. This service provides a range of opportunities for disabled people to foster relationships and to maximise their inclusion and participation in the community, both within the service and the wider society.

Disabled people are supported to achieve goals, engage in life enhancing activities (including those that may involve a degree of risk) have opportunities for learning and employment, participate in family and social life - like others at similar stages of life.

Key outcomes DSS are seeking to be delivered through this service are:

- a good quality of life and a place to live in that feels like home, upholds personal dignity, independence, and respects privacy and
- 24-hour support at the level necessary for people to have a safe and satisfying home life.

There are several different types of Community Residential Support Services purchased by DSS. The following types of Community Residential Support Services are considered in this RFA:

- Community Residential Support Services for People with Intellectual Disabilities (ID).
- Community Residential Support Services for People with Physical Disabilities (PD).

#### 3.2. Objectives & Scope

DSS are establishing a suitably qualified Panel of Providers that have been through the procurement process and who:

- Meet a minimum and common standard, demonstrating the capability to provide required services at the defined standard.
- Are party to a common set of terms and conditions including delivery standards, pricing models, reporting requirements and methods of engagement.

Panel members could include small Providers, existing Providers, those new to the Disability Sector, or a combination of these, delivering nationally and/or regionally. Equity for tāngata whaikaha Māori is a priority. DSS welcomes innovation, collaboration and partnerships in this procurement process.

Current Providers should indicate which regions they currently provide Community Residential Support Services in and identify the regions the wish to deliver in. Prospective Providers should identify the regions the wish to deliver Community Residential Support Services in.

Through this process, DSS is committed to:

- ensuring continuity of care; so disabled people supported in residential care continue to receive quality and safe care in their usual place of residence.
- maintaining service capacity; so disabled people and whānau maintain choice and control about where they live and who supports them.

### **3.3. Required deliverables**

DSS purchases Community Residential Support Services (the Services) for disabled people who need this level of support, so that they can enjoy a good quality of life and live in a place that feels like home, one that upholds personal dignity, independence and respects privacy.

The Provider will be required to deliver on the services outlined in Appendix 3 (service specification).

### **3.4. Timeline for Delivery**

DSS will require delivery of Community Residential Support Services from the contract start date of 01 December 2025.



## 4. Evaluation Methodology

### 4.1. Evaluation process

Applications will be reviewed and assessed by DSS as they are received. The evaluation methodology is based on quality. This method prioritises the quality of the Application, focusing on factors like service model, business requirements, service sustainability, quality requirements, health and safety, information security and agreement to the proposed Contract. It is intended that Respondents will be notified of the outcomes of the procurement process no later than 31 October 2025.

### 4.2. Pre-conditions

Respondents are required as part of the application to confirm that they meet a range of pre-conditions. These must be passed to deem applications as compliant and be assessed in full. These pre-conditions are outlined in the Response Form in Appendix 1 to this RFA.

### 4.3. Evaluation criteria

Compliant applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

| Criteria   | Description  |
|--|--|
| Business requirements and Service Sustainability | Assessing business continuity, viability and that the service delivery approach aligns to DSS expectations.  |
| Quality Requirements                             | Assessing that the quality of services delivered meets the required standards including approach to safeguarding.  |
| Health and Safety                                | Assessing that the Respondents have the required processes and policies in place to meet the required health and safety standards in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and DSS' expectations. |
| Information Security                             | Assessing that the Respondents have the required processes and policies in place to meet the required information security standards.  |

### 4.4. Evaluation outcomes

DSS will assess the Compliant Applications against four areas criteria (outlined in 4.2) and rate the Responses on the rating scale listed below. Rating scale:

| Rating | Action   |
|--------|--|
| Green  | Applicants will progress through due diligence processes, contract finalisation and award.   |
| Amber  | Applicants will be asked to provide additional information, undergo additional due diligence process, and potentially agree improvement plans through the contract negotiations with potential conditional contract award. |
| Red    | Applicants will not progress to the next stage of the contract negotiations. The Applicants may seek feedback on their Application and reapply at a later stage.   |

#### 4.5. Additional Due Diligence

There may be an additional due diligence process before a Provider is offered a panel Contract. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Reference check with other government agencies
- Reference check with Provider referees
- Portfolio Manager reference check
- Site visits
- Performance audit
- Evaluation audit
- Compliance audit

## **5. Contract**

### **5.1. Contract Type**

DSS will contract using the Residential Services Panel Agreement to contract these services. The proposed contract is attached to this RFA as Appendix 2 and contains the Residential Services Panel Agreement template, the Residential Panel Terms and Conditions, and a range of contract schedules. Together, these form the “Contract”. These documents are considered as draft subject to finalisation by DSS. You have an opportunity to provide feedback on these documents within the Response Form.

### **5.2. Contract Term**

The initial contract start date is 01 December 2025 and end date 30 November 2035, giving an initial term of 10 years. There are two rights of renewal for an additional five years each, making a maximum contract term of 20 years.

Note that any Providers awarded contracts after the Panel start date will be aligned to the same end date.

## **6. RFA Terms and Conditions**

### **6.1. RFA process terms and conditions**

This RFA is subject to the following Terms and Conditions in [RFA Terms and Conditions](#).

If, after publishing the RFA, we need to change anything about the RFA or RFA process, or want to give Providers additional information we will let all Providers know via the DSS website ([www.disabilitysupport.govt.nz](http://www.disabilitysupport.govt.nz)).

## Acronyms and Glossary

The following acronyms and abbreviations are used in this document.

| <b>Acronym<br/>Abbreviation</b>        | <b>/ Definition</b>  |
|--|--|
| Application                            | The document submitted by Respondents in response to this Request issued   |
| Community Residential Support Services | Means Community Residential Support Services for people with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) an/or people with Physical Disabilities (PD).  |
| Contract                               | Means the form of contract attached as Appendix 2 to be used for all Providers who are awarded a contract through this RFA procurement process.<br><br>The Residential Services Panel Agreement template, the Residential Panel Terms and Conditions, and the contract schedules, together, form the “Contract” or “Proposed Contract” as the case may be. |
| Disabled People                        | Disabled people funded by the Purchasing Agency for disability support services. This includes population groups, e.g.: tāngata whaikaha Māori, tagata sa'ilimalo, the Deaf community, rainbow, refugee and migrant communities  |
| Disability Sector                      | Term used to include disabled people, tāngata whaikaha Māori, family, whānau, disability community and support providing organisations   |
| Disability Support Providers           | Organisations that the Purchasing Agency funds to provide disability support services.   |
| DSS                                    | Disability Support Services a business unit within Ministry of Social Development  |
| ID                                     | Intellectual Disability  |
| MSD                                    | Ministry of Social Development   |
| Panel                                  | The Residential Support Panel of Providers that will be formed through this procurement process  |
| PD                                     | Physical Disability  |
| Point of Contact                       | All communications regarding this RFA must be directed to this person  |

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Preferred Provider    | The Provider(s) that have been provisionally selected for either due diligence or to enter into contract negotiations (could be subject to final approval by DSS) |
| Provider              | A person or organisation who provides services in the area or market from which DSS is buying   |
| Respondent            | A Provider who submits an Application in accordance with the process set out in this RFA  |
| Response Form         | The template attached at Appendix 1. Providers must use this as the template for their Application  |
| RFA                   | Request for Application   |
| Service Specification | Detailed outline of the services to be provided, attached as Appendix 3   |