



## Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

EMPOWERMENT • OPPORTUNITY • INCLUSION

### WRITER/EDITOR NEEDED

## Develop a User-Friendly “Guide to Understanding Maryland ABLE”

**Proposals Due: November 14, 2018 by noon**

#### SUMMARY STATEMENT

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council) is seeking proposals for a writer/editor (Contractor) to develop a guide to understanding Maryland ABLE based on information contained in the Maryland ABLE Plan Disclosure Booklet, outreach materials, and other program resources. The outcome of this project is a user-friendly guide that will assist people with disabilities and their families to understand Maryland ABLE.

The DD Council is working in collaboration with the Maryland ABLE program on this project.

#### SCOPE OF WORK

Write a “Guide to Understanding Maryland ABLE” by integrating, editing, and re-writing information from the sources noted below. The guide will be in a format and use language intended to enhance the ability of people with disabilities and their families to read and understand information about the Maryland ABLE program. The sources that will serve as resources to develop this guide include:

- The Maryland ABLE Plan Disclosure Booklet (using highlighted sections): [link](#)
- Frequently Asked Questions: [link](#)
- Maryland ABLE outreach PowerPoint slides: [link](#)
- Maryland ABLE marketing brochure: [link](#)
- Table of Trusts and ABLE comparisons: [link](#)

In addition to editing the text, the Contractor will be relied upon to make other recommendations to enhance readability and comprehension, such as additions to the content, alterations to the format and order, and the possible addition of icons or images.

The selected Contractor will work with the Maryland ABLE Program staff, who will provide guidance and will review for accuracy.

The audience for the booklet is people with all types of disabilities and their families, including people with intellectual, developmental, behavioral, and physical disabilities for whom the onset of their disability was prior to age 26.

The Contractor will attend a kick off meeting with DD Council and Maryland ABLE Program staff to discuss the materials that have been provided, clarify expectations, share ideas, answer questions, and establish a pattern of communication, as well as a timeline. Following that, it is expected that the

Contractor will initially work on one section and submit it for feedback to ensure the outcome is what is expected. This will be a collaborative and cooperative process of writing/editing, review and feedback, and refinements.

### **DELIVERABLES**

At the completion of the project, a written Guide to Understanding Maryland ABLE that is easy to understand and comprehend by people with disabilities and their families. In addition, recommendations related to format and layout to further enhance readability and comprehension.

### **OWNERSHIP OF DELIVERABLES**

The DD Council and the Maryland ABLE Program shall own all deliverables that result from this solicitation and have the absolute, unilateral right to use such deliverables with no additional payment being due the Contractor, for not only the currently described situation, but for any other purpose, and to also allow their use by any other entity.

### **CONTRACT TERM AND DATES OF DELIVERABLES**

The term of the contract will begin November 26, 2018. Any suggested changes by the DD Council or Maryland ABLE Program must be promptly incorporated. All final deliverables are due February 28, 2019. The Contractor will work remotely.

### **BACKGROUND**

Maryland ABLE is a savings and investment program that offers people with disabilities the opportunity to save money without jeopardizing access to federal and state means-tested benefits. The program provides the opportunity for people with disabilities and their families to save funds to support individuals with disabilities to maintain health, independence, and quality of life. Maryland ABLE account funds are for qualified disability-related expenses that supplement, not supplant, crucial public benefits, the beneficiary's employment income, and any other source. Read more.

### **WHAT PROPOSALS MUST INCLUDE:**

1. A summary of qualifications (attach a resume);
2. Examples of writing projects that demonstrate skills and experience related to this project. Please explain how each relates to this project and what your role was;
3. Three professional references that may be contacted to confirm satisfaction with results and timeliness;
4. Explanation of how you will complete the deliverables within the required time frame; and
5. A firm, fixed bid price to complete all deliverables as outlined in this solicitation.

In addition:

6. To demonstrate your skills as related to this project, edit/re-write the following brief section from the Maryland ABLE Program Disclosure booklet (from pg. 3) to make it easier to read and comprehend:

#### **Maryland ABLE Overview**

The Program has been developed and is intended to operate as a qualified ABLE Program pursuant to Section 529A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended ("Section 529A"). Section 529A permits states and state instrumentalities to establish and maintain programs that allow Eligible Individuals to save for

Qualified Disability Expenses on a tax-advantaged basis without jeopardizing eligibility for federal means tested benefits such as Supplement Security Income and Medicaid. ABLE Accounts established under the Program are intended to be used for the Qualified Disability Expenses of a particular Eligible Individual. ABLE Accounts are not intended to be used for, nor should they be used by, any taxpayer for the purpose of evading federal or state income taxes or any tax penalties. This Program Disclosure Booklet does not address the potential effects on Beneficiaries of the tax laws or laws relating to state benefits of any state other than Maryland. You should consult a qualified tax adviser about how federal tax laws, Maryland state tax laws, or the tax laws of your state of residence apply to your circumstances. You should consult a qualified special needs planner about how federal laws relating to means-tested benefits, Maryland state laws relating to means-tested benefits, or the laws of your state of residence apply to your circumstances. Federal and state laws or regulations are subject to change and could affect the tax treatment of your ABLE Account and how the balances and withdrawals from your ABLE Account are treated for purposes of your eligibility for federal or state means-tested benefits.

7. Briefly explain how the revisions you incorporated make the document more accessible for people with disabilities and their families.

#### **INFORMATIONAL CALL**

A call to answer questions about this solicitation will be held on **October 30, 2018 at 11:00. a.m.** To join the call, contact Faye Bell-Boulware at [info@md-council.org](mailto:info@md-council.org) or 410-767-6249 for the number and passcode. ***This informational call will be the only opportunity to ask questions. Attendance, however, is not mandatory.***

#### **HOW PROPOSALS WILL BE EVALUATED**

A contract shall be awarded to the Contractor whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to the DD Council and Maryland ABLE Program considering price, writing expertise, and an evaluation using the following criteria:

1. Experience and qualifications of the Contactor, with specific emphasis on similar types of writing;
2. Quality and effectiveness of the edited/re-written version of the booklet information;
3. Capacity to complete all deliverables within the required timeframe; and
4. Quality of references.

*Note:* This is considered a small procurement.

#### **THE DD COUNCIL AND MD ABLE PROGRAM AGREE TO:**

1. Provide information and direction necessary to guide the work of the Contractor;
2. Provide monitoring and assistance throughout the contract period; and
3. Promptly review for approval and/or provide feedback on all materials produced by Contractor.

#### **HOW TO APPLY**

Submit proposals by email to the DD Council by **November 14, 2018 at 12:00pm (noon).**  
Email your proposal to Faye Bell-Boulware at [info@md-council.org](mailto:info@md-council.org).

***Important Note:*** Receipt of all applications will be acknowledged by email or phone. If you do not receive confirmation by 2pm on November 14, contact Faye Bell-Boulware at 410-767-6249.