

Checklist for Agreements for Contracted Services¹

An alternative to hiring staff for a service program is to contract with a community-based organization to provide services on-site. Making sure a good contract is in place can help avoid confusion and prevent problems later on.

A good contract will provide a clear description of the work to be performed in enough detail so that everyone understands what is included just by reading the contract. The total cost and the basis for the fee should also be included, as well as payment terms and ownership rights.

One area that is often overlooked is an exit strategy to identify how, when, and by whom the contract can be terminated, and what processes are involved in that termination.

The following simple checklist can help make sure that agreements for contracted services solve problems rather than create new ones:

1. Name of parties to the agreement.
2. Beginning and end dates of contract.
3. Number of hours and specified period of hours for service delivery.
4. Rate of pay and financial terms for services.
5. Number of staff hired/contracted.
6. Job descriptions with duties/services to be performed and reporting relationships to site management and contractor.
7. Scope of work with goals and objectives to be met and process for measuring success.
8. Location of office(s) and where services will be performed.
9. Storage and access to files.
10. Responsibilities and relationship of contractor and project site.
11. Parties responsible for and the conditions under which the agreement can be terminated.
12. Processes involved at conclusion or termination of the contract, specifying what the service provider must furnish to the management agent to ensure a successful transition (i.e. transition assistance, files, procedures, data, and other items the service provider uses to deliver services, time frame within which the transition will occur).
13. Name, title, dated signatures of parties' authorizing the agreement.

¹ Adapted from Schults, Andrew, Council on Foundations, 2002