

State of Maine Procurement Justification Form

This form must accompany all contract requests and sole source requisitions (RQS) over \$5,000 submitted to the Division of Procurement Services.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please provide the requested information in the white spaces below. All responses (except signatures) must be typed; no hand-written forms will be accepted. See the guidance document posted with this form on the Division of Procurement Services website (Forms page) for additional instructions.

PART I: OVERVIEW				
Department Office/Division/Program:		Labor, Bureau of Unemployment Compensation		
Department Contract Administrator or Grant Coordinator:		Patricia K. O'Brien		
(If applicable) Department Reference #:				
Amount: (Contract/Amendment/Grant)	\$1,119,000.00	Advantage CT / RQS #:	CT 12A 20200729*0308	
CONTRACT	Proposed Start Date:	8/1/2020	Proposed End Date:	6/30/2021
AMENDMENT	Original Start Date:		Effective Date:	
	Previous End Date:		New End Date:	
GRANT	Project Start Date:		Grant Start Date:	
	Project End Date:		Grant End Date:	
Vendor/Provider/Grantee Name, City, State:		NH Learning Solutions Corporation Livonia, MI		
Brief Description of Goods/Services/Grant:		New Horizons will provide trainers and coaches to facilitate the successful implementation of our new virtual learning platform.		

PART II: JUSTIFICATION FOR VENDOR SELECTION			
Mark an "X" before the justification(s) that applies to this request. (Check all that apply.)			
	A. Competitive Process		G. Grant
	B. Amendment		H. State Statute/Agency Directed
X	C. Single Source/Unique Vendor		I. Federal Agency Directed
	D. Proprietary/Copyright/Patents		J. Willing and Qualified
X	E. Emergency – COVID-19		K. Client Choice
	F. University Cooperative Project		L. Other Authorization

PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION
Please respond to ALL the following:
1. Provide a more detailed description and explain the need for the goods, services or grant to supplement the response in Part I.
This is a sole source contract to continue our work with New Horizons Learning. New Horizons will provide trainers and coaches to facilitate the successful implementation of our new virtual learning platform. The contract is to cover the period from 8/1/2020 through 6/30/2021. This will allow OIT to procure a new vendor for training services and at the end of that period, if the bureau has a continued need, we would procure that need through the vendor with the master agreement.

State of Maine Procurement Justification Form

PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

The Maine Department of Labor's Bureau of Unemployment Compensation has faced extreme workload volume due to COVID 19. As a result, we are increasing our staffing significantly and need to define a new way to train new staff being onboarded into the bureau and Unemployment Insurance, which is a program that involves a state and federal partnership.

The bureau has an internal training unit, but its size was not going to be adequate to meet the needs of the bureau in the immediate future. The bureau is in the process of implementing a new learning management program, creating a virtual learning platform on which various materials will be loaded related to a training curriculum to the various training tracks for classifications within the bureau. We initially are focused on direct service positions and positions that are related to preventing and prosecuting fraud. Materials to be loaded on the platform include; system specific manuals, training videos, modules from the NASWA UI Integrity Academy, quizzes, test cases specific to a classification learning track. Due to the small number of internal training staff we will be using New Horizons for two functions;

Trainers for specific tracks in the ReEmployME system and for coaching staff regarding the virtual training platform.

- Train new employees on ReEmployME system functionality
- Train new employees on the basics of unemployment eligibility rules and laws.
- Train new employees the basic nuts and bolts of unemployment insurance
- Provide a training team whose primary goal is to help the employee effectively learn and apply the knowledge gained.
- Support the employee by providing a variety of learning tools and training techniques through multimedia resources, group and one-on-one training opportunities
- To ensure employees are engaged and productive, long-term by providing training of the unemployment insurance program by means of a layered training approach.
- Be available to coaches/new employees during sandbox time.
- Create additional training as warranted

The Coach's role is to work directly with new hires and UI Team Leaders, during the training process, in conjunction with the UI Training & Support Unit.

- The coach will provide new hires with links and logins to training environments, provide training assignments and monitor each trainees' daily progress.
- The coach will schedule bi-weekly group check-ins with new hires, via Microsoft Teams, to help assess whether additional training is needed and identify any gaps or concerns regarding the trainees' progress. These check-ins are meant to provide the trainees with moral support and to ensure they are progressing and understanding the training and content provided.
- The coach will provide Basic Microsoft Teams training to new hires
- The coach will be responsible for ensuring each trainee is completing assignments, quizzes and is attending all scheduled live or virtual trainings.
- The coach will provide a weekly progress update to the Team Leader on each trainees' progress. They will alert the Team Leader if they have concerns about a trainees' progress. Through a combined effort, the coach and the Team Leader will work to assist a struggling trainee by identifying possible alternative training methods or approaches.
- Responsible for a case load of 10-15 trainees per coach/trainer
- Provides lesson plan and guidance to trainees
- Tracks and maintains individual lesson plans for trainees

State of Maine Procurement Justification Form

PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

We have identified a reduced use of the coaches in the latter part contract.

2. Provide a brief justification for the selected vendor to supplement the response in Part II.

New Horizons has held the master agreement for IT training for approximately four years. We currently have a DO with them and have been working with them as part of the implementation of our virtual learning platform project.

New Horizons has been working with the training unit manager and staff to organize via spreadsheet the daily training agendas.

We focused on three classifications initially; Unemployment Insurance Eligibility Agent, Claims Adjudicator and Accounting Associate (for our Unemployment Insurance Tax Division). These are all direct service positions.

New Horizon gleaned program and training information from Training unit staff and then began organizing a daily training curriculum for each classification.

The daily curriculum spreadsheet could include any of following;

- Training modules
- Training videos
- Applicable assignments to be completed
- Practice Time
- Self-Study
- Quizzes

New Horizons trainers worked with our training staff to organize the curriculum track to enable the bureau to quickly transition this to the virtual training platform. This has reduced our implementation time for the virtual training platform project and reduced the strain on our small training unit, which is getting pulled continually to train contact vendor staff, and our department staff that are helping with various tasks associated with multiple federal programs being implemented in a staggered manner, as a result of the CARES act. The workload related to COVID 19 related closures has exceeded the Bureau of Unemployment Compensations workload capacity until we are able to onboard all the positions earmarked for hire.

New Horizons knowledge and skill set has been invaluable to allow us to organize the criteria in manner consistent with the methodology needed for virtual training platform.

3. Explain how the negotiated costs or rates are fair and reasonable; or how the funding was allocated to grantee.

The rate for trainers is the current master agreement rate. The coaching rate is slightly lower at \$125 an hour.

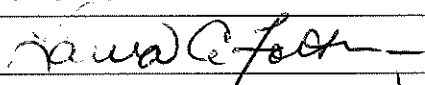
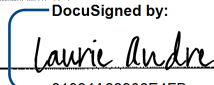
State of Maine Procurement Justification Form

PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

4. Describe the plan for future competition for the goods or services.

OIT is scheduled to put together an RFP for these services. Once OIT procures a new vendor for training services and at the end of this agreement, if the bureau has a continued need, we would procure that need through the vendor with the master agreement.

PART IV: APPROVALS

Signature of requesting Department's Commissioner (or designee):	<i>By signing below, I signify that I approve of this procurement request.</i>		
			
Printed Name:	LAURA A. FORTMAN	Date:	8/21/2020
Signature of DAFS Procurement Official:	<small>DocuSigned by:</small> 		
Printed Name:	<small>81084A22906E4FB...</small> Laurie Andre	Date:	8/27/2020