



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES

STATE OF MAINE

PROCUREMENT JUSTIFICATION FORM (PJF)

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 intranet site (Forms page) for additional instructions.

PART I: OVERVIEW

Department Office/Division/Program:		DHHS/OFI/MIS		
Department Contract Administrator or Grant Coordinator:		Shawn Belanger		
(If applicable) Department Reference #:		OFI-24-B45		
Amount: (Contract/Amendment/Grant)	\$1,522,070.00	Advantage CT / RQS #:	RQS 10A 2023081800000000299	
CONTRACT	Proposed Start Date:	09/01/2023	Proposed End Date:	08/31/2024
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:		TALX Corporation DBA Equifax Workforce Solutions Atlanta, GA		
Brief Description of Goods/Services/Grant:		Employment Verification System		

PART II: JUSTIFICATION FOR VENDOR SELECTION

Mark an "X" before the justification(s) that applies to this request. (Check all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	A. Competitive Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	G. Grant
<input type="checkbox"/>	B. Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/>	H. State Statute/Agency Directed
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C. Single Source/Unique Vendor	<input type="checkbox"/>	I. Federal Agency Directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	D. Proprietary/Copyright/Patents	<input type="checkbox"/>	J. Willing and Qualified
<input type="checkbox"/>	E. Emergency	<input type="checkbox"/>	K. Client Choice
<input type="checkbox"/>	F. University Cooperative Project	<input type="checkbox"/>	L. Other Authorization

Please respond to ALL of the questions in the following sections.

PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

1. Provide a more detailed description and explain the need for the goods, services or grant to supplement the response in Part I.

Eligibility determinations for the Department's Office for Family Independence's (OFI) three major programs; MaineCare, TANF and SNAP require verification of income and employment history for eligibility and benefit amount determinations. Income and employment information in the form of paystubs, W2's, etc., can be submitted by client's applying for services, but this method is cumbersome and can lead to inaccurate and/or incomplete information, especially if the job has ended, for eligibility determinations and can cause overpayments in benefits. In some instances, employers are not helpful or timely in providing to their employee's verification of their employment. They require employees to obtain verification using The Work Number. If employment information isn't provided timely, it can cause a loss in benefits, and re-processing of cases for eligibility staff once obtained. For SNAP, work requirements and timely verification of employment are important to maintain eligibility, or for closure of benefits for individuals who are not complying with the work requirements. As new policies are established, increasing the need for determinations to be made, the Department's OFI is researching ways for our Eligibility Specialists to keep up with the demands through systemic efficiencies.

Per statute 22 MRSA §16-B – Verification of integrity of reported information by applicants for public assistance reads: The department shall use commercially available data to conduct an electronic verification of information provided on an application for benefits for public assistance as defined in section 16, subsection 1, paragraph C. The electronic verification must, at a minimum, be conducted on all new applications for benefits and must include searches for income, residency and available assets.

2. Provide a brief justification for the selected vendor to supplement the response in Part II. Reference the RFP number, if applicable.

The Work Number is a database of income and employment records of over 5,500 employers nationwide. Payroll data is updated every payroll cycle by the employers. In addition to the basic employment information, it includes wages, commissions, bonuses, overtime and historical information. Since employers regularly feed into this system, data is delivered instantaneously. This tool was created by the Provider in 1995, acquired by Equifax in 2007, and at the time of acquisition, the Provider was the leading provider of employment verification.

Other verifications services do exist; but they do not meet the Department's OFI requirements regarding payroll and wage specific data necessary for eligibility and benefit determination. Upon research, there is no evidence indicating change in their provided services to include this specific data set within their system. These systems focus primarily on individual background screening for hiring purposes and/or employment verifications on hire dates and this is already data we receive with the NDNH file and is not something we are looking to receive in our income/employment records via The Work Number. The Work Number is the only verification system providing real-time data, with the largest number of nationwide employers, and with the necessary data elements required for benefit and eligibility determinations.

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

Negotiated costs are based on an annual subscription payment with monthly installment charges. Costs include 100,000 transactions annually. The Department considers these costs to be fair and reasonable.

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

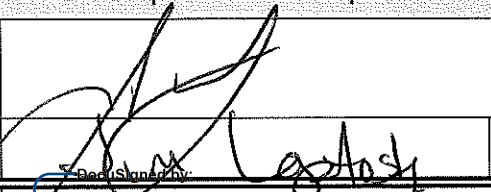

The Department will continue to conduct market research to see if there are any other qualified providers of this service. If any are found, the Department will competitively procure this service.

PART IV: AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) / MAINE JOBS & RECOVERY PLAN (MJRP)

Does this request utilize ARPA/MJRP funds?

Yes – If Yes, please attach the approved Business Case(s).

No – If No, proceed to Part V

PART V: APPROVALS		
The signatures below indicate approval of this procurement request.		
Signature of requesting Department's Commissioner (or designee):		
Typed Name:	Nancy Tan	Date: 29 Aug 23
Signature of DAFS Procurement Official:		
Typed Name:	Nancy Tan Deputy Director of IT Procurement	Date: 9/26/2023