



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES
OFFICE OF STATE 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 Office of State 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 Procurement Services intranet site (Forms page) for additional instructions.

PART I: OVERVIEW				
Department Office/Division/Program:		Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry, PFAS Fund (Commissioner's Office)		
Department Contract Administrator or Grant Coordinator:		Beth Valentine, PFAS Fund Director		
(If applicable) Department Reference #:				
Amount: (Contract/Amendment/Grant)		\$ \$10,000.00	Advantage CT / RQS #:	CT 01A 20240827000000000417
CONTRACT	Proposed Start Date:	9/15/2024	Proposed End Date:	6/30/2025
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:		VT Association of Business, Industry, & Rehabilitation (DBA Farm First) Williston, VT		
Brief Description of Goods/Services/Grant:		VT Association of Business, Industry, & Rehabilitation, DBA Farm First, will provide consulting services to assist the PFAS Fund in establishing a robust mental health support system for farmers and other eligible individuals impacted by PFAS contamination.		

PART II: JUSTIFICATION FOR VENDOR SELECTION			
Check the box below for 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.

Farming is generally recognized as a high-stress profession. The rate of suicide among farmers is three and a half times higher than among the general population, according to the National Rural Health Association. Knowledge of PFAS exposure and concerns about health effects, financial stability, and an uncertain future can amplify existing feelings of stress and anxiety. The PFAS Fund will address these concerns by developing a support system comprised of the following components:

1. Individual one-on-one supportive counselling,
2. A team of mental health providers to provide one-on-one counseling, who are trained in the understanding the unique characteristics of farming and the associated health and mental health vulnerabilities, including those caused by exposure to contaminants,
3. A trained peer support network supported with ongoing supervision,
4. Web-based resources to assist farmers address, and where possible remediate, underlying sources of stress,
5. Optionally
 - a. A 24/7 hotline
 - b. Trainings for agricultural service providers

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

VT Association of Business, Industry, & Rehabilitation, DBA Farm First, is uniquely qualified to help design a mental health support system for farmers. It was founded in 2009 when agricultural services providers noted a dangerous rise in the stress and financial strain experienced by Vermont dairy farmers when milk prices declined precipitously. Within Vermont, Farm First provides one-on-one counseling, has developed a farmer peer network, provides farmers with access to a 24/7 hotline staffed by licensed mental health counselors, and hosts web-based resources. The program has been well utilized and is recognized nationally. Farm First has also consulted with other states, including Massachusetts, to develop similar programs.

5 M.R.S.A. 1825-B(2)(G). The procurement of goods or services involves expenditures of \$10,000 or less, and procurement from a single source is the most economical, effective, and appropriate means of fulfilling a demonstrated need.

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

The cost for consulting services is consistent with or more favorable than other professional services the PFAS Fund has contracted for (e.g., appraisals and legal services).

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

PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

VT Association of Business, Industry, & Rehabilitation, DBA Farm First, will deliver a report that summarizes the availability and roles of potential partner organizations and provides an overview of how these organizations can best collaborate to accomplish the goals at hand. Farm First will define the pros and cons of what each organization has to offer, make specific recommendations for both how to best meet the core objectives of the project, and delineate the extent and form of involvement of each of the participating organizations. The PFAS Fund Director will use this report to contract for services to implement a mental health support system for PFAS-impacted Maine farmers and other eligible individuals.

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

Does this request utilize ARPA/MJRP funds?

Yes, MJRP funds (023) – If Yes, please attach the approved Business Case(s).

Yes, ARPA funds (025) – If Yes, please be aware of the requirements from awarding federal agencies.

No – If No, proceed to Part V.

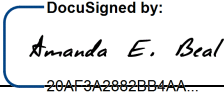
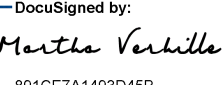
PART V: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (COI); CONTRACT WITH THE STATE

Maine law contains Conflict of Interest statutes directed to State Departments, State Officers, and Employees Generally under MRS [Title 5, §18](#) and [§18-A](#), in harmony with MRS [Title 17, §3104](#).

The requesting department signatory understands and acknowledges Maine’s Conflict of Interest statutes.

PART VI: APPROVALS

The signatures below indicate approval of this procurement request.

Signature of requesting Department’s Commissioner (or designee):	DocuSigned by:  20AF3A2882BB4AA...		
Typed Name:	Amanda E. Beal	Date:	9/19/2024
Signature of DAFS Procurement Official:	DocuSigned by:  891CE7A1493D45B...		
Typed Name:	Martha Verhille	Date:	10/9/2024