

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:		DHHS/OFI/MIS	
Department Contract Administrator or Grant Coordinator:		Shawn Belanger Matt Galletta	
(If applicable) Department Reference #:		OFI-21-B45A	
Amount: (Contract/Amendment/Grant):	\$1,324,022.86	Advantage CT / RQS #:	RQS 10A 20211027000000000472
CONTRACT	Proposed Start Date:	Proposed End Date:	
AMENDMENT	Original Start Date:	New Start Date:	09/01/2020
	Original End Date:	New End Date:	08/31/2021
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.			
	A. Competitive Process		G. Grant
X	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
	E. Emergency		K. Client Choice
	F. University Cooperative Project		L. Other Authorization
PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS			
Please respond to ALL of the following questions.			
1. Provide a more detailed description of the goods, services or grant to supplement the response in Part I.			

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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.

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 to add funds for year 2 that was not included in the original BPO, in error, at the same level of transactions, 78,000, which was the highest level offered, with a 6.5% increase in cost over year 1. The Department surpassed the maximum level of transactions by 34,643. Funding needs to be added to pay the additional transactions at the agreed year 1 rate of \$9.74 per transaction. Amendment to UMA also increases maximum transactions from 78,000 to 100,000.

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, quotes will be attained to determine the best value for the next 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:	<i>Ben Moran</i>	Date:	<i>11/1/21</i>
Signature of DAFS Procurement Official:	<i>Jaime C. Schorr</i>		
Printed Name:	Jaime C. Schorr	Date:	12/2/2021