**STATE OF MAINE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**RFP AMENDMENT # 1 AND**

**RFP SUBMITTED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SUMMARY**

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| **RFP NUMBER AND TITLE:** | 202407144 New Hire Reporting Program |
| **RFP ISSUED BY:** | Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Family Independence |
| **SUBMITTED QUESTIONS DUE DATE:** | August 26, 2024, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| **AMENDMENT AND QUESTION & ANSWER SUMMARY ISSUED:** | September 9, 2024 |
| **PROPOSALS DUE DATE:** | September 30, 2024, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| **PROPOSALS DUE TO:** | Proposals@maine.gov |
| **Unless specifically addressed below, all other provisions and clauses of the RFP remain unchanged.** |
| **DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES IN RFP:**1. Part II, L. all references to *“On-Site Visit”* are removed in its entirety.
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**Provided below are submitted written questions received and the Department’s answer.**

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| **1** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Purpose and Background, Section A, Exhibit 1, Page 6 | 1. How many employers were notified for EPP outreach in 2022 and 2023?
2. What is the breakdown by email, fax, and mail in 2022 and 2023?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. The Department does not have this data for 2022 and 2023. However, the Department can confirm there were four thousand nine hundred eleven (4,911) employers with violations in the first (1st) quarter of 2024 and six thousand three hundred ninety-six (6,396) employers with violations in the fourth (4th) quarter of 2023.
2. The breakdown by email, fax, and mail related to 2022 and 2023 is not available.
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| **2** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Introduction, Section A.1, Page 6 | This area of the RFP states the following:"Through this RFP, the Department intends to implement a New Hire Reporting Program, in compliance with 19-A M.R.S. § 2154, which: 1. Incorporates DSER’s existing Maine Employer Portal."1. Would the State consider allowing the awarded Bidder to manage and maintain all Maine portal services?
2. If not, can the State elaborate on the specifics of this integration? For example, does this mean linking the New Hire Reporting Program website to and from the Maine Employer Portal?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. No.
2. Refer to Part II, H. of the RFP.
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| **3** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Scope of Services, Header, Page 9 | The header of this section states that "Specific instructions for the Bidder to provide a narrative response to the Scope of Services may be found in Part IV, Section III, Services to be Provided." 1. Can the State confirm that all bidder responses to the RFP's Scope of Services should be provided within Appendix G?
2. Further, can the State advise whether bidders may use their own template to provide responses to the Scope of Services so long as they copy over the contents of Appendix G (in an identical fashion)?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Yes.
2. Per Part IV of the RFP, *“Include any forms provided in the submission package or reproduce those forms as closely as possible. All information must be presented in the same order and format as described in the RFP.”*
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| **4** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Scope of Services, Section B.2.a, Page 9  | RFP states, “Receive the EPP Report from the Department via email quarterly.” However, Part 2, Section F.4 states “Electronically accept a quarterly secure file transfer of EPP Report data…” Can the State confirm the EPP reports will be provided via secure file transfer and not via email? |
| **Answer** |
| EPP Reports will be provided via secure file transfer. |

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| **5** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Scope of Services, Section B.4, Page 9 | RFP states, “Encourage and facilitate Employers to use electronic reporting, whenever possible, of New Hire information, terminations, employment verification, electronic wage withholdings, and reporting of lump sum payments due to Employees.”Additional service level items are not detailed within this RFP for terminations, employment verification, electronic wage withholdings, and reporting of lump sum payments. Can the State confirm this is related to informational outreach only to employers or are these services expected to be part of the new hire reporting website? |
| **Answer** |
| The awarded Bidder will not be expected to issue withholding orders, verify employment, or receive reports of lump sums. However, the awarded Bidder will provide this information gained as a part of its outreach activities. |

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| **6** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Scope of Services, Section C.3.a, Page 9 | RFP states, “Ensure the IVR provides answers to frequently asked questions and operator assistance if requested by the caller.”Can live operators available Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST, replace the requirement for an IVR System? (This would be supplemented by a live chat tool and direct email inquiries to customer service, which are typically responded to within one hour.) |
| **Answer** |
| No, refer to Part II, C.3. of the RFP. |

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| **7** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Scope of Services, Section A.1, Page 9 | Under Section A, General Requirements, the RFP states:1. *Develop and implement a New Hire Program to ensure the Department’s compliance with 19-A M.R.S. § 2154.*
	1. *Collect data for the State Directory of New Hires (SDNH); and*
	2. *Transmit collected New Hire information through the Department’s Division of Support Enforcement and Recovery (DSER), Child Support Enforcement Maine (CSEME) system.*

There is no mention of the Vendor generating and disseminating the IWO on behalf of Maine within the scope of services. Will the State of Maine generate and disseminate the IWO once the New Hire data is transmitted to CSEME? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **8** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Key RFP Events, Section C.3.f, Page 16 | The response files listed do not account for Appendix I or Appendix J. Can the State advise whether bidders are to return these forms with their proposal responses? |
| **Answer** |
| **Appendix I** will be included as part of the resulting contract.**Appendix J** will be utilized by the awarded Bidder during the contract period to report quarterly Performance Measure data. |

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| **9** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Key RFP Events, Section C.3.f, Page 16 | The RFP notes a PDF format preference for Files 1-3. Can the State clarify whether it would like one consolidated PDF for Files 1-3 (i.e., three PDFs total), or one compressed Zip folder with individual PDFs (i.e., three zip folders total)? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to Part III, C.2.f. of the RFP. |

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| **10** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Proposal Submission Requirements, Section II, Requirement 5, Page 18 | 1. Can the State advise whether CPA-reviewed financial statements are acceptable to meet the requirement under this section?
2. Further, can the State confirm that this information will not be shared with other parties (via FOIA requests or other means) so long as bidders clearly mark the pages as "Confidential?"
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| **Answer** |
| 1. CPA-reviewed financial statements are not required, but acceptable.
2. Bidders may mark some portion of their proposal as confidential. If a Bidder marks some portion of their proposal as confidential then the Department will provide the Bidder with a reasonable opportunity to object to public disclosure of the proposal.  The Department, however, provides no assurance regarding whether any portion of the proposal will ultimately be determined to be confidential and not publicly disclosed.
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| **11** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Proposal Submission Requirements, Section II, Requirement 6, Page 18 | Do bidders need to provide an ACORD certificate of insurance with their bids, or confirm they meet the insurance requirements and provide a certificate upon contract award? |
| **Answer** |
| A valid certification of insurance on a standard ACORD form or the equivalent must be provided with the Bidder proposal submission. |

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| **12** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Proposal Submission Requirements, Section II, Requirement 6, Page 18 | In this section, the Department's "IT Service Contract (IT-SC)" is formatted as though it is linked, but there does not seem to be a URL associated with it. Can the State share the intended link/URL? |
| **Answer** |
| [IT Service Contract (IT-SC)](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/sites/maine.gov.dafs.bbm.procurementservices/files/inline-files/IT%20Service%20Contract%20%28IT-SC%29%20Template_1.12.24_0.pdf). |

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| **13** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Proposal Submission Requirements, Section II.3, Page 18 | 1. Would the State like Bidders to name their proposed project team members, or should Bidders only provide "position titles and job descriptions, including minimum qualifications, for all project staff including the project lead," as requested under Section 2, Staffing, Appendix G?
2. If the former, would the State like Bidders to provide resumes for these individuals?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. The names of individual proposed project team members are not required.
2. No, Bidders are not to provide additional attachments beyond those specified in the RFP. Additional materials not requested will not be considered part of the proposal and will not be evaluated.
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| **14** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix F, Technical Assessment Form, Page 31 | For Appendix F, are Table of Contents, policy excerpts, and policy lists considered acceptable artifacts? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidder discretion. |

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| **15** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Can the State provide its internal staffing levels (full and part-time) that currently support the operations of the project? |
| **Answer** |
| No, refer to Exhibit 1 under Part I, A. of the RFP for the volume of new hire statistics for fiscal years 2021 through 2023. |

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| **16** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | 1. How many employers are in the current database?
2. How many employers have you received a new hire report from in the last 12 months and in the last 24 months?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Five thousand one hundred seventy-four (5,174).

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| **Number of Employers Reporting** |
| **# of Months** | **Electronic Reporting** | **Fax Reporting** |
| 12 | 17,692 | 2,882 |
| 24 | 22,563 | 4,403 |

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| **17** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Will the awarded Bidder be able to port over the existing telephone and fax numbers/lines? |
| **Answer** |
| No.  |

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| **18** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | 1. How many telephone lines are being used for incoming calls?
2. How many incoming and outgoing telephone calls were there for 2022 and 2023 per month?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. The Department does not have dedicated telephone lines for new hire related calls.
2. The Department does not have this data.
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| **19** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | 1. Does the State have a transition plan in place to migrate the in-house operation of new hire reporting to the awarded Bidder?
2. If so, can the State provide a copy?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. The Department expects the awarded Bidder to collaborate with the Department on a transition plan.
2. N/A.
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| **20** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Can the State provide a copy of its current compliance and outreach material? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department will provide the awarded Bidder with the current compliance and outreach materials. |

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| **21** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | 1. Can the State provide a copy of the current informational mailing material being sent to employers?
2. What is the breakdown by email, fax, and mail in 2022 and 2023?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. The Department will provide the awarded Bidder with the current informational mailing materials being sent to employers.
2. The Department does not have this data.
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| **22** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Please provide details on the outreach activities over the past 24 months. How many mailings monthly? Quarterly? Annually? How many employers in each mailing? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department does not have this data. |

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| **23** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Upon award of the contract, can the awarded Bidder receive a copy of the current employer database? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **24** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Will the State provide visibility into the number of other Bidders bidding on this RFP / project? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department cannot predict how many vendors will be submitting a bid under this RFP. |

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| **25** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | What is the annual, quarterly, or monthly incoming call volumes and voicemails for this project? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer to Question 18 of this document. |

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| **26** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | What is the annual, quarterly, or monthly incoming email volumes for this project? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department does not have this data. |

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| **27** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Would the State consider sharing a budget with Bidders for this project? |
| **Answer** |
| As this is a competitive process the Department declines to answer. |

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| **28** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Can the State advise whether the evaluation of cost will be based on the initial contract term only, or the initial contract term and optional contract extensions/years? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the Instructions on **Appendix H**. |

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| **29** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Does the State have any protocols or procedures that bidders should follow to safeguard and protect any sensitive, confidential, and/or proprietary information? In relation, would the State consider accepting redacted copies of proposal responses (in addition to unredacted ones) that the State may use for any FOIA requests it may receive pertaining to this solicitation? |
| **Answer** |
| Bidders may mark some portion of their proposal as confidential. If a Bidder marks some portion of their proposal as confidential then the Department will provide the Bidder with a reasonable opportunity to object to public disclosure of the proposal.  The Department, however, provides no assurance regarding whether any portion of the proposal will ultimately be determined to be confidential and not publicly disclosed.   |

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| **30** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Can the State advise whether it has a preference with respect to required signatures? (For example, are both digital and electronic acceptable, or is one preferred over the other?) |
| **Answer** |
| It’s at the Bidder’s discretion. |

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| **31** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Purpose and BackgroundSection A, #1, page 6 | 1. Will the State clarify the role of Maine Employer Portal with the selected vendor? For example, are employers currently submitting new hire reports to the site?
2. If so, how will the vendor receive the reports?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. Yes, some employers currently submit new hire reports to the site.
2. To be determined during implementation.
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| **32** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Purpose and BackgroundSection A, #3, page 6 | Does Maine want the vendor to provide the new hire URL or would the state like the vendor to use the existing portal URL? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department expects the awarded Bidder to utilize the existing portal URL. |

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| **33** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Customer Service Section C, #3i, page 9 | Regarding the current New Hire form (<https://portal.maine.gov/newhire/pdf/Maine_NewHire_Reporting_Form.pdf>)1. Will the State transfer the current toll-free number to the selected vendor for the term of the contract? The number is listed on the current new hire form:
2. The current New Hire form has a local fax number. Does the State want the new vendor to use this fax number in addition to providing a toll free fax number?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. No, the awarded Bidder will be required to provide a toll-free number.
2. No, the awarded Bidder will be required to provide a fax number.
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| **34** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Contract Term Section C, page 7 | 1. What is the State’s target award date for this opportunity?
2. What is the State’s target date to complete contract negotiations?
3. What is the State’s target date for the awarded vendor to begin implementation so that they can begin providing the requested services on 1/1/25?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. The Department declines to answer.
2. The Department declines to answer.
3. Refer to Part I, C. of the RFP.
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| **35** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Website and Technical RequirementsSection H., c., page 11 | Would the State please provide more information on the functions of the [*Maine Employer Portal*](https://portal.maine.gov/newhire/)for New Hire Reporting? |
| **Answer** |
| The current functionality of the New Hire Reporting can be obtained at the [Maine Employer Portal](https://portal.maine.gov/newhire/). |

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| **36** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| End of Contract Transition ResponsibilitySection J, 1, e., page 13 | “Written commitment to provide access to the New Hire Reporting facility by the Department and others in relation to re-procurement.”Can the State please clarify if bidders are required to have a physical facility in the State of Maine for this procurement? |
| **Answer** |
| Bidders are not required to be physically located in Maine.  |

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| **37** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Performance Measures, Section L., #2, b., page 14 | Can the State please clarify if bidders are required to have a physical facility in the State of Maine for this procurement? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the amendment at the beginning of this document and the answer to Question 36 of this document. |

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| **38** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix I Security Obligations | Please confirm that Appendix I Confidentiality and Non-disclosure agreement would be signed after notice of intent to award. If Appendix I is required with the response, please instruct in which file to place it. |
| **Answer** |
| **Appendix I** will be included as part of the resulting contract. |

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| **39** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV Section II and Section III, pages 18 and 19 | RFP Part IV Section II lists Attachments 1 – 6 to include in the proposal and RFP Part IV Section III lists Attachments 7 – 9 to include in the proposal. RFP Part III Section C.2.f lists Appendix F and Appendix G to include in the proposal, but does not assign an Attachment number for them. Please verify that there is no attachment number associated with Appendix F and Appendix G. |
| **Answer** |
| There is no attachment number associated with **Appendix F** and **Appendix G**. |