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| **RFP NUMBER AND TITLE:** | RFP# 202503044 Research and Reporting on Aging and Disability Services  |
| **RFP ISSUED BY:** | Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Aging and Disability Services  |
| **SUBMITTED QUESTIONS DUE DATE:** | April 9, 2025, no later than 11:59 p.m., local time |
| **QUESTION & ANSWER SUMMARY ISSUED:** | April 24, 2025 |
| **PROPOSAL DUE DATE:** | May 6, 2025, 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, C. add a Reports Timeline Table
2. **Appendix G**, Cost Proposal is revised
 |
| **REVISED LANGUAGE IN RFP:**1. *Part II, C. adds the following Reports Timeline Table:*

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| **Reports Timeline Table** |
| **Tab/Line on Cost Form** | **Report Titles** | **Expected Due Dates** |
| Year 1 – Line 1Year 3 – Line 1Year 5 – Line 1 | LTSS Residential Setting Characteristics Comparison Biennial Report  | Biennially, June 2026, 2028, and 2030 |
| Year 1 – Line 2Year 2 – Line 3Year 3 – Line 2Year 4 – Line 3Year 5 – Line 2 | Developmental Disability Annual Report  | Annually, January 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, and 2030 |
| Year 1 – Line 3Year 2 – Line 5Year 3 – Line 3Year 4 – Line 6Year 5 – Line 3 | APS State Plan Annual Summary  | Annually, May 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030 |
| Year 2 – Line 1Year 4 – Line 1 | LTSS Capacity and Needs Biennial Report | Biennially, June 2027 and 2029 |
| Year 2 – Line 2Year 4 – Line 4 | Developmental Disability Biennial Report  | Biennially, January 2027 and 2029 |
| Year 2 – Line 4Year 4 – Line 5 | Autism Spectrum Disorder Biennial Report  | Biennially, January 2027 and 2029 |
| Year 3 – Line 4 | APS 5-year State Plan  | May 2028 |
| Year 4 – Line 2 | LTSS Four (4) Year Report | January 2029 |

1. **Appendix G**, Cost Proposal form is replaced in its entirety.

 |
| **All other provisions and clauses of the RFP remain unchanged.** |

**Provided below are submitted written questions received and the Department’s answer.**

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| **1** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part VI,Page 17 | Is a Maine business license required to submit a proposal? Will it be required if a contract is awarded? |
| **Answer** |
| Bidders should seek legal counsel regarding any required business requirements for Maine. In addition, Bidder may refer to the State of Maine, [Business webpage](https://www.maine.gov/portal/business/).  |

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| **2** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part VI,Page 17 | Are there any restrictions on the use of funds? |
| **Answer** |
| Use of funds must be related to the delivery of services outlined in this RFP. |

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| **3** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part VI,Page 17 | Can you share which riders will be included in an eventual contract? |
| **Answer** |
| The full list of contract documents, including riders will be negotiated between the Department and the awarded Bidder. Bidder may obtain the State of Maine contract documents on the Division of Procurement Services [Forms webpage](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/forms) and the Department of Health and Human Services specific contract documents at the Division of Contract Management’s [Contract Document webpage](https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/about/financial-management/contract-management/contract-documents). |

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| **4** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II,Page 8-9 | Can you confirm whether only one cumulative annual report is required for Adult Protective Services over the full contract period, or if a separate report is required for each contract year (2025, 2026, and 2027)? |
| **Answer** |
| The APS State Plan Annual Summary is due annually. Refer to the added Reports Timeline Table at the beginning of this document. |

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| **5** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II,Page 8-9 | Can you confirm whether only one cumulative annual report is required for Developmental Disability and Brain Injury over the full contract period, or if a separate report is required for each contract year (2025, 2026, and 2027)? |
| **Answer** |
| The Developmental Disability Annual Report is due annually. Refer to the added Reports Timeline Table at the beginning of this document. |

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| **6** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II,Page 8-9 | Are there any predefined deadlines for submitting the required reports, or is submission expected at any point within the contract period (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027)? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the added Reports Timeline Table at the beginning of this document.  |

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| **7** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part I, A.Page 5 | 1. Could you clarify what is meant by “facilitating communications and meetings with department-identified stakeholders”?
2. Specifically, do you already have a list of these stakeholders?
3. What is the intended scope or purpose of this engagement? For example, is the goal to gather data, feedback, or something else?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. The awarded Bidder will be required to facilitate events and/or meetings with stakeholders, community organizations, and/or the public in order to collect data needed for the development each report listed in the RFP.
2. Stakeholders may include individuals receiving services, family members, service providers, community organizations, advocacy organizations, and other state agency partners.
3. The intended scope/purpose is to gather data.
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| **8** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.Page 8 | Can you provide an estimate of the number of data points or records that will be analyzed as part of this project? |
| **Answer** |
| Each report contains unique data elements which is a combination of records sourced from publicly available statistics, Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services data files, Department provided figures, tables, charts and survey data that is collected for a specific reporting purpose. Examples of past reports, available on the Department’s Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS) [Policy & Planning](https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/about-us/policy-planning) and [Data & Reports](https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/about-us/data-reports) webpages, which illustrate the various elements contained in each report. However, these reports are not necessarily representative of the future work products sought through this RFP. |

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| **9** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.Page 9 | Regarding the requirement to “collect related data and input from Department partners and stakeholders, community organizations, and the public” — can you offer more detail on the expected level of difficulty in accessing this data?  |
| **Answer** |
| The level of difficulty is expected to be consistent with any data collection efforts associated with conducting a remote survey. The reports primarily rely on existing data with some stakeholder or interested party engaged to gather feedback.  |

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| **10** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.Page 9 | Will any part of the work need to be conducted on-site or in person? For instance, the RFP mentions “facilitating events and meetings for collecting data and input” — will any of these be in-person, and if so, approximately how many? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidders’ discretion. |

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| **11** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Are you willing to share the NTE budget per year for this project?  |
| **Answer** |
| As this is a competitive process, the Department declines to answer. |

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| **12** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part I, A. Page 5 | At least one of the RFP-required reports was developed by the Catherine Cutler Institute, Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine (i.e., Maine APS Data Trends FY21-FY23, available at <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/sites/maine.gov.dhhs/files/inline-files/FY21-23-APS-Report.pdf>). 1. Was the University also responsible for the other RFP-required reports? If yes, what is the value of their contract for services?
2. If the University was not responsible, does the State currently contract with another vendor to develop the RFP-required reports? If yes, what is the value of that contract?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Yes. State contracts are public information and may be obtained at the Office of State Procurement Services, [Service Contract Search](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/reports/service-contract-search) webpage.
2. N/A.
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| **13** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | 1. Is there an incumbent or current vendor doing this work?
2. If yes, why are you launching this RFP?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Yes.
2. 5 M.R.S. §1825-B, requires the Department to competitively procure services. The previous competitive procurement under RFP 202006106 ends on 6/30/2025.
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| **14** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided |  Could you please provide the budget range allocated for this project?   |
| **Answer** |
| As this is a competitive process, the Department declines to answer. |

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| **15** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II,Page 8 | For budgeting purposes, can the state clarify the approximate due dates for the first biennial LTSS summary and biennial developmental disability and brain injury plan to be delivered under this contract (e.g., June 2026 or June 2027)? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the added Reports Timeline Table at the beginning of this document. |

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| **16** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix F, Page 25 | Should bidders only present the work plan as a timeline chart, or is a narrative summary also expected? |
| **Answer** |
| The Implementation – Work Plan must be provided in a timeline chart, concisely describing each program development and implementation task, the month it will be carried out and the person or position responsible for each task, and if applicable, make note of all tasks to be delegated to subcontractors. Per Part IV, Bidders are not to provide additional attachments beyond those specified in the RFP for the purpose of extending their response. Additional materials not requested will not be considered part of the proposal and will not be evaluated. |

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| **17** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Does the state have an anticipated level of effort or cost limit for this project? |
| **Answer** |
| As this is a competitive process, the Department declines to answer. |

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| **18** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix G, Page 30 | What is the expected budget range for this work? |
| **Answer** |
| As this is a competitive process, the Department declines to answer. |

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| **19** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV,Page 14 | Is there an anticipated budget/funding amount for this effort that can be provided? |
| **Answer** |
| As this is a competitive process, the Department declines to answer. |

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| **20** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.2. Page 8 | The RFP requires the vendor to “Coordinate and facilitate communications and meetings with Department-identified stakeholders as needed…” Does the state anticipate the coordination or facilitation of meetings conducted in person, remotely, or as a combination of both (i.e., hybrid)? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidders’ discretion. |

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| **21** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.3.a. Page 9 | The RFP states that the vendor will “Schedule and facilitate events and meetings for collecting data and input.” 1. Approximately how many events and meetings will the vendor facilitate per report or per contract year?
2. Could the state provide information about where the events and meetings will be held (e.g., remote, Augusta) and the approximate numbers of attendees?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Meetings and event frequency are based on report type and is expected to be scheduled as needed to accomplish research, analysis, and report development activities.
2. It is at the Bidders’ discretion to determine how/where meetings and events will occur. Meetings/events size varies based on the meeting’s purpose and since some meetings are open to the public, an approximate number cannot be specified.
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| **22** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, 1, Page 12 | The RFP requests that bidders include “three (3) examples of projects within the last five (5) years” to demonstrate experience and expertise. Would the Department permit bidders to substitute relevant past performance from consultants or subcontractors in place of corporate past performance for these examples? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes.  |

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| **23** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | The RFP requires signed forms such as the Proposal Cover Page (Appendix A) and the Responsible Bidder Certification (Appendix B). Will the Department accept digital signatures for these forms and any other required attachments? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes, the Department accepts electronic signatures from DocuSign or Adobe Sign. |

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| **24** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, A.1.aPage 8 and Part II, B.1.aPage 9 | 1. Will the Department be providing access to the data necessary to complete all the reports described in the RFP, similar to data provided for current reporting, including the LTSS system capacity and needs assessment report?
2. If so, how will that access be provided?
 |
| **Answer** |
| 1. Yes.
2. For some reports, the Department will provide data via an Excel spreadsheet. It is at the awarded Bidder’s discretion how to collect any additional data required for research, data analysis, and report development.
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| **25** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II., B.3.aPage 9 | Is the APS 5-year plan due in the first or second year of the first contract period? |
| **Answer** |
| The APS 5-year State Plan is due May 2028. Refer to the added Reports Timeline Table at the beginning of this document. |

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| **26** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II., B.3.aPage 9 | Does the Department envision a stakeholder engagement process to inform the development of the APS 5-year State plan? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **27** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part I, Page 5 | In addition to external comparison research and the past data reports available on the website, what current data is available to the vendor and in what format? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer in question 24 of this document.  |

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| **28** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part I,Page 5 | What is the role of the Maine Department of Health and Human Services and its DD, BI, and LTSS programs as it relates to the services covered under this RFP? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department’s OADS is the operating agency for DD, BI, and LTSS programs and is required to report to the Maine State Legislature. |

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| **29** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part I, Page 5 | Does the Department currently provide any research or will this be solely the responsibility of the awarded contractor? |
| **Answer** |
| The awarded Bidder is responsible for providing research related to the requirements outlined in the RFP. |

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| **30** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part I, Page 5 | How many Maine Department of Health and Human Services staff and contracted staff are currently supporting research and reporting for the services covered under this RFP? |
| **Answer** |
| Due to the multiple reports being due at different timeframes, the Department does not have past information on the number of State or contracted staff supporting the research and reporting for these services.  |

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| **31** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Are there any specific education and/or background requirements for the staff? |
| **Answer** |
| No. |

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| **32** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, Pages 8-9 | What was the estimated total amount of hours used in the past year for each report requested in the “Scope of Services to be Provided”? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department does not have an estimated number of hours used in the past year for each report.  |

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| **33** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, Pages 8-9 | What percent of time is currently being completed onsite vs. offsite for research and data reporting? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department does not have this data.  |

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| **34** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part I, Page 5 | The RFP states “The awarded Bidder shall assist the Department in the development of materials, through 2. Facilitating communications and meetings with Department-identified stakeholders, as needed in the reporting process.” Can a list of Department-identified stakeholders be provided by report? |
| **Answer** |
| No, events are open to the public; therefore, the Department cannot predict the numbers of stakeholders/attendees. Refer to the answer to question 7.b. for a list of potential stakeholders.  |

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| **35** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part I, Page 5 | The RFP states “The awarded Bidder shall assist the Department in the development of materials, through 2. Facilitating communications and meetings with Department-identified stakeholders, as needed in the reporting process.” Please confirm if the communications and meetings are in-person or virtual listening sessions, etc. |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidders’ discretion. |

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| **36** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, Page 9 | The RFP states the contractor must “Collect related data and input from Department partners and stakeholders, community organizations, and the public. Schedule and facilitate events and meetings for collecting data and input.” Can the Department provide an estimate of how many stakeholder events on average from division identified stakeholders? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department anticipates at least one (1) event per program (DD, APS, LTSS) should be anticipated. |

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| **37** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Is there an anticipated annual spend for this contract? |
| **Answer** |
| As this is a competitive process, the Department declines to answer. |

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| **38** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part I, B.Page 6 | The RFP states “5. The proposal must be signed by a person authorized to legally bind the Bidder and must contain a statement that the proposal and the pricing contained therein will remain valid and binding for a period of 180 days from the date and time of the bid opening.” Please confirm if the State will accept secure, electronic signatures in lieu of original signatures on all required forms. |
| **Answer** |
| Yes, the Department accepts electronic signatures from DocuSign or Adobe Sign. |

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| **39** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV,Page 12 | If the bidder does not intend to use subcontractors or consultants, please confirm if Appendix D should be submitted. |
| **Answer** |
| Bidders must indicate on **Appendix D** if subcontractors are not being utilized.  |

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| **40** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Page 13 | The RFP states “Bidders must provide a valid certificate of insurance on a standard ACORD form (or the equivalent) evidencing the Bidder’s general liability, professional liability and any other relevant liability insurance policies that might be associated with the proposed services.” Please confirm if bidders can submit evidence of insurance with their bid or if the Certificate of Insurance must name the Maine Department of Health and Human Services as the Certificate Holder. |
| **Answer** |
| Evidence of insurance must be submitted with the Bidders’ proposal.  |

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| **41** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Page 13 | The RFP states “Bidders must provide a valid certificate of insurance on a standard ACORD form (or the equivalent) evidencing the Bidder’s general liability, professional liability and any other relevant liability insurance policies that might be associated with the proposed services.” Please provide the detailed limits for all required insurance policies for this contract (e.g., Commercial General Liability Insurance, Workers Compensation). |
| **Answer** |
| Bidders should consult with their insurance agency to determine the appropriate levels of insurance. |

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| **42** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | What is the estimated award date? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department anticipates a conditional award notification to be issued late May/early June 2025. |

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| **43** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Page 14 | Does the Department believe there would be any conflict of interest if the awarded vendor for this solicitation is also an awarded vendor for the Maine Department of Health and Human Services Office of Behavioral Health, Request for Proposal # 202502024, entitled “Independent Reviewer”? |
| **Answer** |
| No, the Department does not foresee a conflict of interest.  |

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| **44** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Have your current vendor(s) been able to meet all of your existing service needs for this contract? If not, which of your needs are not being met? |
| **Answer** |
| As this question is outside the scope of the RFP, the Department declines to answer. |

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| **45** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Can the Department provide any details or copies of current contract(s) for incumbent vendor(s) providing research and reporting services? |
| **Answer** |
| The current contract may be obtained at the Office of State Procurement Services, [Service Contract Search](https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/reports/service-contract-search) webpage by clicking Vendor Self Service Portal, Public Access, and selecting the Service Contract Search tab, and search by contract number 20240627000ADS259813. |

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| **46** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Is there an incumbent currently conducting this work? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. |

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| **47** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Does the state have a maximum budget guideline for this project?  |
| **Answer** |
| As this is a competitive process, the Department declines to answer. |

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| **48** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Does DHHS have specific requirements for engaging community members? For example, does DHHS imagine these sessions will be held in-person, virtually, or both? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidders’ discretion. |

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| **49** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | If the release of the Q and A is delayed for any reason, would the State consider extending the proposal due date to allow for at least five business days between the posting of the Q/A and the proposal submittal deadline? |
| **Answer** |
| Per Part III, A.2. responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and posted on the following website no later than seven (7) calendar days prior to the proposal due date. |

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| **50** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Can the Department offer any guidance on the expected level of effort for each year of the project? |
| **Answer** |
| The level of effort varies by report. Minimally, the awarded Bidder should plan for time to meet with state staff to plan each report, meetings with state staff for the purposes of gathering information and data for each report, adequate time for conducting external research, analyzing all information collected, writing a report and obtaining department feedback. |

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| **51** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.3.Page 9 | This item instructs the contractor to “collect related data and input from Department partners and stakeholders, community organizations, and the public.” Can the Department offer any guidance on the number of surveys, interviews, and focus groups that we should budget for?  |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the existing reports at the Department’s Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS) [Policy & Planning](https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/about-us/policy-planning) and [Data & Reports](https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/about-us/data-reports) webpages.  |

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| **52** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | In addition to the required reports, is the bidder expected to be available to conduct additional research, data analysis, or reporting? |
| **Answer** |
| No. |

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| **53** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix F C.1.Page 2 | It is not clear how this requested Gantt chart differs from the requested Gantt chart under Sec. 3.a. on p. 4 |
| **Answer** |
| Appendix F, Part IV, Section III, Part II, C.1. is for the ongoing report development throughout each contract period, Bidders should describe how they intend to meet the requirements of the ongoing work plan by providing a clearly organized format (such as a Gantt chart), for completing reports, throughout each contract period to include deadlines set by Legislature, the Department, and by identifying specific tasks, task owners, and task deadlines. This work plan will be an ongoing effort.Appendix F, Part IV, Section III, C. is for the implementation – work plan for the initial period of performance.  |

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| **54** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Will the Department be issuing a fixed price contract? If not, what type of contract is anticipated? |
| **Answer** |
| The resulting contract will be a total fixed price per report. Once each report is received by the Department, the awarded Bidder will submit an invoice to the Department for payment.  |

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| **55** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix G Page 26 | Can the Department advise if there is a specific method the Department would like bidders to utilize to calculate the Blended Hourly Rate requested in Column E of Tabs 2 onward? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department expects the Blended Hourly Rate for each report to include all costs associated with the requirements outlined in the RFP, including general requirements. |

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| **56** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV Page 14 | Does the State of Maine have an estimated budget for the requested activities outlined in the RFP? |
| **Answer** |
| As this is a competitive process, the Department declines to answer.  |

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| **57** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix E Page 28 | Is the State requesting that bidders respond with litigation in courts in the State of Maine, or out of state litigation as well? |
| **Answer** |
| Bidders must provide a list of all current litigation in which the Bidder is named and a list of all closed cases that have closed within the past five (5) years in which the Bidder paid the claimant either as part of a settlement or by decree. For each, list the entity bringing suit, the complaint, the accusation, amount, and outcome. |

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| **58** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix E Page 28 | In many cases information about the disposition of litigation may be legally forbidden to be provided due to non-disclosure obligations. Should bidders limit their disclosure only to litigation where the requested outcome and amount information is legally permitted to be provided? |
| **Answer** |
| Bidders should seek legal counsel on the disclosure/non-disclosure of specifics within its litigation.  |

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| **59** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part I, A.Page 5 | Where the RFP says that “These reports are not necessarily representative of the future work products sought through this RFP.” Does this mean that there are additional reports above and beyond those listed in Part II, B or that the ones that are available at those links are not necessarily what you anticipate wanting the future reports to look like? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department does not anticipate additional reports beyond what is listed in the RFP. The current reports available at the Department’s Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS) [Policy & Planning](https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/about-us/policy-planning) and [Data & Reports](https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/about-us/data-reports) webpages are only examples of previous reports provided and not necessarily the required format/contents of what future reports may look like.  |

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| **60** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part I, A.3.Page 5 | Where the state requires a “scientific basis” for findings, does the data mean that the findings are based on evidence and properly cited sources and reflective of quantitative and qualitative analysis? Or does the state have another meaning of “scientific basis” in mind? |
| **Answer** |
| Yes. Properly cited sources should come from peer-reviewed and/or credible sources. The Department does not have another meaning of scientific basis. |

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| **61** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.Page 8 | How many and which of the standard reports to be developed as part of the execution of this RFP will be due within the first six months of the contract following execution? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the added Reports Timeline Table at the beginning of this document. |

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| **62** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.Page 8 | Are any of the reports past due or may be considered past due at the time of the contract’s execution? |
| **Answer** |
| No. |

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| **63** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.Page 9 | Are there any required start and end dates for any of the reports and/or any critical milestones or deadlines within the project timeline that bidders should be aware of that are not listed in the RFP, itself? If so, can the state provide these or direct bidders to where to find these? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the added Reports Timeline Table at the beginning of this document. |

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| **64** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.Page 9 | Are there specific data security and confidentiality compliance standards or regulations that the vendor must adhere to? If so, what are they? |
| **Answer** |
| Data security and confidentiality compliance standards include but are not limited to the Department’s [Privacy and Security of Health Information](https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/privacy). |

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| **65** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.Page 9 | Are there specific data analysis or program evaluation methodologies or frameworks preferred for conducting research and reporting? |
| **Answer** |
| No, each report is unique, and the framework and related methodology must align with the report’s purpose and specific legislative requirements. |

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| **66** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.Page 9 | Are all the data sets used in report development provided by the Department or will the vendor have both the opportunity and responsibility of collecting data and/or obtaining comparative data sets from other states relevant to the reports the vendor is developing? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer to question 24 of this document. |

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| **67** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Section IVPage 14 | What is the allocated budget for this project? |
| **Answer** |
| As this is a competitive process, the Department declines to answer.  |

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| **68** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Section IVPage 14 | Are there specific funding sources or constraints that bidders should consider? |
| **Answer** |
| As this is a competitive process, the Department declines to answer.  |

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| **69** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV, Section IVPage 14 | Will there be opportunities for budget adjustments based on project needs or findings? |
| **Answer** |
| Per Part IV, Section IV, 1.b., the cost proposal must include the costs necessary for the Bidder to fully comply with the contract terms, conditions, and RFP requirements.  |

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| **70** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | 1. Is there an incumbent vendor currently providing these services?
2. If so, what challenges have been identified?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. Yes.
2. As this question is outside the scope of the RFP, the Department declines to answer.
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| **71** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.1.a. and b., B.2.a.i. and iii.Page 8 | Please confirm that when the applicant sees the word “biennial” in relation to reporting that the expectation is to submit a report in June 2027 and again in June 2029. |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the added Reports Timeline Table at the beginning of this document |

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| **72** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.1.c.,Part 8 | Please clarify whether the 4-year report should be submitted in June 2029 or June 2030. |
| **Answer** |
| The LTSS Four (4) Year Report is due January 2029. Refer to the added Reports Timeline Table at the beginning of this document |

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| **73** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.1.c.i.Page 8 | Please clarify what types of data are included in this state plan. |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the Advancing States, Tools for Planning, [Developing a State Plan on Aging](https://www.advancingstates.org/initiatives/aging-policy-and-programs/tools-planning) webpage.  |

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| **74** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, 3.b.,Page 9 | It is our understanding that the Administration for Community Living is no longer active. Please confirm whether this requirement to comply with this state plan is still in effect for this contract. |
| **Answer** |
| The Department has not been made aware of any changes in the Federal Administration for Community Living (ACL) requirements. However, the Department is required based on [22 M.R.S. §50](https://legislature.maine.gov/legis/statutes/22/title22sec50.html) to complete a State Plan.  |

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| **75** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part III, 3. Page 26, APPENDIX GPage 11 | RFP instructs that File 4 Cost Proposal be submitted as an Excel file. Are we also to submit the Word version of APPENDIX G in addition to the Excel budget provided in the RFP? If so, would this item be submitted as File 5? |
| **Answer** |
| **Appendix G** Cost Proposal cover page should be submitted in File 4 as a PDF, in addition to the Excel Cost Proposal Form.  |

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| **76** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part IV,Page 14 | Is there a budget cap we should consider? |
| **Answer** |
| As this is a competitive process, the Department declines to answer. |

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| **77** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II,Page 8-9 | Are all reports current with their submissions? If not, which reports are not current, and what is the timeline for getting them completed? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer in question 62 of this document.  |

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| **78** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Appendix G, Page 26 | In the cost proposal, should costs involved in completing the general requirements (e.g. stakeholder engagement, p. 8) be entered as separate line items or be included in the report costs for each year? |
| **Answer** |
| The Department expects the Blended Hourly Rate for each report to include all costs associated with the requirements outlined in the RFP, including general requirements.  |

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| **79** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Can you share information about the funding sources for this project (i.e. general and/or federal dollars? |
| **Answer** |
|  State General Funds |

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| **80** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, Page 8 | Does OADS leadership have a preference on whether any meetings with the project team/Department stakeholders should be conducted in person, virtually, or both? |
| **Answer** |
| It is at the Bidders’ discretion. |

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| **81** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Not Provided | Is there an estimated budget allotted for this work? If so, what is the estimated budget for year 1? |
| **Answer** |
| As this is a competitive process, the Department declines to answer. |

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| **82** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B. Pages 8-9 | 1. Are any of the required reports to be presented publicly?
2. Should they be in pdf, dashboard, etc. format?
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| **Answer** |
| 1. Final reports are published on the Department’s Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS) [Policy & Planning](https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/about-us/policy-planning) and [Data & Reports](https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/about-us/data-reports) webpages.
2. All final reports must be in a PDF (.pdf) format.
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| **83** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C.Page 9 | Are there any external data sets already available to the agency or does the Vendor need to support external data requests and ingestion? *(Examples: Hospital Discharge, Census, etc.)* |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the answer in question 24 of this document.  |

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| **84** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, C. Page 9 | Is there currently a cloud data platform or data warehouse / lake available within the agency to conduct D&A? If so, can you provide details about that solution? |
| **Answer** |
| No, refer to the answer in question 24 of this document.  |

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| **85** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.1.a. and b. Page 8 | What is the deadline for the initial biennial reports required? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the added Reports Timeline Table at the beginning of this document. |

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| **86** | **RFP Section & Page Number** | **Question** |
| Part II, B.1.b. Page 8 | How are LTSS Residential Settings defined for the purposes of the biennial comparison of LTSS Residential Setting Characteristics? |
| **Answer** |
| Refer to the Centers for [Medicare and Medicaid Services Minimum Data Set (MDS) 3.0 Resident Assessment Instrument (RAI) Manual](https://www.cms.gov/medicare/quality/nursing-home-improvement/resident-assessment-instrument-manual).  |