REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION (RFQ)

RFQ # 1436-522

Project Title: **ESA Medical and Psychological Services**

Estimated Contract Period: Date of Execution Through End Date of Contract. Amendments extending the period of performance, if any, shall be at the sole discretion of DSHS.

Submit Application to:

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1. CSD Aged, Blind or Disabled (ABD) Program Medical Evidence Reviews
2. CSD Disability Eligibility Review
3. CSD Mental Incapacity Evaluations
4. DDDS Consultative Medical Examinations – Developmental Therapy/Speech-Language Pathology
5. DDDS Consultative Medical Examinations
6. DDDS Consultative Medical Examinations – Otolaryngology/Audiology/Pediatric/Vision
7. DDDS Consultative Psychiatric Examinations
8. DDDS Consultative Psychological Examinations
9. DDDS General Medical and Psychological Consultative Services
10. DDDS Specialized Medical Consultative Services
11. DDDS Specialized Psychological Consultative Services

Procurement Website: https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ccs/
WEBS: https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/webs/

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SECTION A. SUMMARY OF PROJECT

1. **Purpose of Request for Qualifications.** The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), Division of Disability Determination Services (DDDS) is issuing this Request for Qualifications (RFQ). The purpose of this RFQ is to expand the list of qualified psychologists to provide Specialized Psychological consultative services to DSHS/DDDS adjudicative staff and others who make disability determinations on behalf of the Social Security Administration.

2. **Background.** The DDDS adjudicates claims for the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and the DSHS Non-Grant Medical Assistance (NGMA) programs. As part of the adjudicative process for determining medical eligibility, the DDDS reviews medical records. Medical or psychological consultation and expertise may be needed to document the specific impairments and to determine severity as required by Social Security Disability regulations.

3. **Project Scope.** Each year, the DDDS processes approximately 90,000 claims for Social Security disability programs and NGMA claims. This RFQ seeks responses from both physical and psychiatric specialties to perform contract services in our Tumwater, Seattle, and Spokane offices. Contract services include the evaluation of physical impairment severity from medical records and other reports, utilizing Social Security regulations and rules of law. Medical consultants function as members of the adjudicative team and assist staff in determining eligibility for disability benefits. A sample contract is attached to this RFC as Exhibit D.

4. **Qualification Requirements.** In order for the Applicant's response to this RFQ to be considered, the Applicant must meet each of the following qualifications:

   a. Each Applicant or Subcontractor who provide Specialized Psychological consultative services under any contract awarded must have received the appropriate post-graduate school training and experience in the appropriate physical or psychiatric specialty for the consultation as described in the Qualification Requirements section of the Contract.

   b. Applicants who provide Specialized Psychological consultative services under any contract awarded must be a licensed psychologist in the State of Washington.

   c. Applicants submitting an application for this RFQ must be licensed to do business in the State of Washington or obtain a Washington State business license from the Secretary of State.

   d. Applicants currently suspended, under investigation, or restricted from providing health care or diagnostic services by any government regulatory agency may not qualify.

   e. Applicants must have at least one year of experience working with electronic medical files.

   f. Applicants must have the ability to work a reliable and consistent schedule with the majority of work hours during DDDS business hours (Monday – Friday, 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.) when DDDS staff are present.

g. Applicants must be able to attend quarterly MC meetings, held on an established meeting date the third week of February, May, August and November.

h. Applicants must have a minimum of five (5) years of current experience with psychologist consultation with the DDDS.

i. Applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have had one (1) year experience adjudicating material difference involving second opinions.

5. Auxiliary Aids and Services.

a. DSHS will provide access to this RFQ document to individuals with disabilities. Please contact the RFQ Coordinator to request auxiliary aids and services for this RFQ.

b. If an individual believes that the department has discriminated on the basis of a disability, please contact the DSHS Investigations Unit (IU) for the Nondiscrimination Policy Brochure and complaint process. The brochure can be found at http://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/SESA/publications/documents/22-171.pdf.

6. Minority & Women's Business Enterprises (MWBE) and Veteran-Owned Business Enterprises.

a. In accordance with the legislative findings and policies set forth in RCW 39.19, 43.60A.200 and 39.29.052, the State of Washington encourages participation by veteran-owned business enterprises and Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE), either self-identified or certified by, respectively, the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Office of Minority & Women's Business Enterprises Office of Minority & Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE). While the State does not give preferential treatment, it does seek equitable representation from the veterans, minority and women's business communities.

b. Participation by veteran-owned and MWBE contractors may be either on a direct basis in response to this RFQ or as a subcontractor to a contractor. However, no preference will be given in the evaluation of Applications, no minimum level of MWBE or veteran-owned business participation shall be required, and Applications will not be evaluated, rejected or considered non-responsive on that basis.

c. Applicants may contact the Office of Minority & Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE) at http://www.omwbe.wa.gov/index.shtml and/or the Department of Veterans Affairs at http://www.dva.wa.gov/BusinessRegistry/default.aspx to obtain information on certified firms for potential sub-contracting arrangements or for information on how to become certified.

d. Nothing in this section is intended to prevent or discourage participation from non-MWBE firms or non-veteran-owned businesses.

7. Definitions. The following terms, which appear in this RFQ, have the meaning that is defined below for the purposes of this RFQ:

a. "Agency" means the Department of Social and Health Services is the agency of the State of Washington that is issuing this RFQ.

b. “Apparently Successful Applicant” means an Applicant selected as having submitted a successful Application, based on the final determination of DSHS management taking into consideration the Applicant's qualifications and the needs of DSHS. The Applicant is considered an "Apparently” Successful Applicant until a contract is finalized and executed.

c. “Applicant” means an individual, provider group, or other business entity submitting an application in response to this RFQ.

d. “Application” means all material prepared and assembled by an Applicant, and which the Applicant submits in response to this RFQ.

e. “Business Day” means Monday through Friday excluding state holidays. A Business Day starts at 12:00 a.m. (midnight) and ends at 11:59 p.m. (See Table A–1 for list of state holidays)

f. “Contractor” means an individual, provider group, or other business entity whose application has been accepted by DSHS and is awarded a fully executed, written contract.

g. “DDDS” means Division of Disability Determination Services, which is a division of the Economic services Administration (ESA) of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).

h. “DSHS” means the state of Washington Department of Social and Health Services, which is the agency issuing this RFQ.

i. “ESA” means Economic Services Administration, which is an administration of the Department of Social and Health Services.

j. “Impairments” means a client’s physical or mental impairments as defined in Program Operations Manual System (POMS) DI 24501.020, as now written or hereafter amended.

k. “Issue” means to mail, post or otherwise release this RFQ as a public document to interested parties.

l. “Key Personnel” means the staff being proposed to do the work under this Application.

m. “PII” means Personally Identifiable Information and is any information about an individual maintained by an agency, including (1) any information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual’s identity, such as name, social security number, date and place of birth, mother’s maiden name, or biometric records; and (2) any other information that is linked or linkable to an individual, such as medical, education, financial, and employment information.

n. “POMS” means Program Operations Manual System.

o. “Protest” means an objection by the Applicant, in writing, protesting the results of this RFQ, and which complies with all requirements of this RFQ.

p. “RCW” means the Revised Code of Washington. All references in this RFQ to RCW chapters or sections shall include any successor, amended, or replacement statute. Pertinent RCW chapters can be accessed at http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/.

q. “RFQ” means the Request for Qualification (e.g. this RFQ document).

r. “RFQ Coordinator” means the person named in this RFQ as the RFQ Coordinator, or the RFQ Coordinator's designee. The sole point of contact within DSHS regarding this RFQ for potential Applicants and other interested parties.

s. “SSA” means the Social Security Administration, a Federal Agency.

t. “SSA Enterprise Network” means SSA proprietary software systems.

u. “Statement of Work” means the services the Contractor is to provide under any contract awarded, which is included in the Special Terms and Conditions section of the Contract or in the form of an exhibit attached to the Contract.

v. “Subcontractor” means any qualified provider who signs a separate agreement with a DSHS Contractor and who the Contractor pays for providing medical and psychological service examinations.

w. “Submit” means to deliver to the DSHS RFQ Coordinator any of several documents described in this RFQ and in the manner specified in this RFQ.

x. “Timekeeper” means official time tracking system.

y. “WAC” means the Washington Administrative Code. All references to WAC chapters or sections shall include any successor, amended, or replacement regulation.

z. “WEBS” means the Washington Electronic Business Solution (Registration System). DSHS encourages all Applicants (or Applicants) to register with WEBS at https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/webs/.

Table A–1. ***STATE HOLIDAYS***

Item	Action
New Year's Day	January 1
Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday	3rd Monday in January
President's Day	3rd Monday in February
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	1st Monday in September
Veteran's Day	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	4th Thursday in November
Friday immediately following Thanksgiving Day	
Christmas Day	December 25

** If a holiday falls on a Saturday, state offices are closed on the preceding Friday. If it falls on a Sunday, state offices are closed on the following Monday.*

SECTION B. PROCUREMENT PROCESS

1. **Procurement Contact Information.** Upon release of this RFQ, all communications concerning this RFQ must be directed only to the appropriate RFQ Coordinator listed below. Any communication directed to DSHS staff or consultants, other than the RFQ Coordinator may result in disqualification.

RFQ Coordinator:	Jennifer Elsen, Medical Relations Manager Department of Social and Health Services Economic Services Administration Division of Disability Determination Services
Mailing Address:	P.O. Box 9303 Olympia, WA 98507-9303
Physical Address:	6737 Capitol Boulevard S Building 2, 1st Floor Tumwater, WA 98501-5581
Telephone:	(360) 664-7356
Fax:	(360) 586-0851
E-mail:	Jennifer.Elsen@ssa.gov

2. **Acceptance of RFQ Terms.** In submitting an Application that includes a signed Applicant Certification and Assurances Form, attached as Exhibit B, the Applicant acknowledges that it accepts all terms of this RFQ, including all of its attachments, and that the Applicant's Application constitutes a binding offer which may be accepted by DSHS through naming the Applicant as the Apparently Successful Applicant and awarding the Applicant a fully executed, written Contract.

3. **Contract.** DSHS intends to award one (1) contract to provide the services described in this RFQ. The term of the Contract will be from the date of execution through the end date of the Contract. Amendments extending the period of performance, if any, shall be at the sole discretion of DSHS.

4. **Ethics.** Specific restrictions apply to contracting with current or former state employees pursuant to chapter 42.52 of the Revised Code of Washington.

   a. Applicants should familiarize themselves with the requirements prior to submitting an Application.

   b. In addition, as described in Section C.1, *Administrative Requirements,* below, Applicants must include, a list identifying any current or former state employees who are employed by, or subcontracted with Applicant. The list must include the name of the employee or subcontractor, the individual's employment history with the State of Washington, and a statement of the individual's involvement with the response to, or their proposed role in providing the services under a contract resulting from this RFQ.

5. **Procurement Schedule.** The Procurement Schedule outlines the tentative schedule for important action deadlines and times. All deadlines after the application submission are approximate and may be adjusted as conditions indicate, without amending this document. It is the Applicant's sole responsibility to periodically check with the RFQ Coordinator for amendments to this document.

Table B–1. ***PROCUREMENT SCHEDULE***

Item	Action
1.	DSHS Issues RFQ.
2.	Applicant may submit written questions and comments until 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time. (NOTE: This date must be **five (5) business days prior** to application submission)
3.	DSHS will Issue responses.
4.	Applicants may submit written complaints by 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time. (NOTE: This date must be **five (5) business days prior** to application submission)
5.	DSHS notifies Apparently Successful Applicants within **forty-five (45) business days after** receipt of the properly completed Application.
6.	DSHS notifies Apparently Unsuccessful Applicants within **forty-five (45) business days after** receipt of the properly completed Application.
7.	Applicants may request Debriefing within **three (3) business days** from the date of the letter and/or by the date and time specified in the letter.
8.	DSHS holds debriefing conferences within **five (5) business days after** receipt of the debriefing request, if requested
9.	Apparently Unsuccessful Applicants may submit Protest(s) by 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time. (NOTE: This date must be within **five (5) business days after** the debriefing conference)
10.	DSHS considers and responds to any Protest(s) within **five (5) business days after** receipt of the protest request, if requested, unless more time is required to review the Protest and make a determination.
11.	Contract Execution.

6. **Proprietary Information/Public Disclosure.** Materials submitted in response to this RFQ shall become the property of DSHS. All applications, evaluation documents, and other documents that make up this Procurement shall remain confidential until:

   a. DSHS makes it available to the public pursuant to RCW 42.56; or,

   b. The Contract, if any, resulting from this RFQ is signed by DSHS and the Apparently Successful Applicant. Thereafter, the Application shall be deemed public record as defined in RCW 42.56. The Applicant's Application must include a statement identifying any page of its Application, if any, which contain information the Applicant considers proprietary. Each page claimed to be proprietary must be clearly marked by printing the word "Proprietary" on the lower right hand corner. Applicants must be reasonable in designating information as proprietary or confidential. **Applicants may not mark their entire Application proprietary. In doing so, Applications may not be honored and/or may disqualify from further consideration.**

   c. If DSHS receives a request to view or copy an Applicant's Application, DSHS will respond according to applicable law and DSHS's policy governing public disclosure. DSHS will not disclose any information marked "Proprietary" in an Application without giving the Applicant ten (10) days' notice to seek relief in superior court per RCW 42.56.540.

   d. Do not include any DSHS client information in your Application. Doing so will disqualify your Application from further consideration. If you wish to include examples of any forms or processes, use a blank form or ensure client information is redacted.

7. **Communications.** All communications concerning this RFQ should be directed only to the RFQ Coordinator. Any communication directed to DSHS staff or consultants, other than the RFQ Coordinator, may result in disqualification. Applications should be based on the material contained in this RFQ, any related amendment(s), and any questions and answers directed through the RFQ Coordinator.

8. **Questions and Answers.** Applicants may email or mail written questions to the RFQ Coordinator up to five (5) business days prior to Application submission. Applicants may only rely on written statements issued by the RFQ Coordinator. Any oral communications are unofficial and are not binding on DSHS.

9. **Applicant Comments Invited.** Applicants are encouraged to review the mandatory requirements of this RFQ carefully, and submit any comments and recommendations to the RFQ Coordinator. Where mandatory requirements appear to prohibit or restrict participation by your organization or firm, an explanation of the issue with suggested alternative language should be submitted in writing to the RFQ Coordinator. Should an Applicant comment identify a change that would be in the best interest of the DSHS to make, DSHS may modify this RFQ accordingly.

10. **Applicant Complaints Regarding Requirements.**

   a. Applicants may submit any complaints they have concerning the RFQ requirements up to five (5) business days prior to Application submission. The complaint must be made in writing to the RFQ Coordinator and the Applicant must clearly articulate the basis for

the complaint as well as include a proposed remedy. The application process and contract award may continue.

b. These complaints will **not** be handled through the protest procedures outlined in Section B.21, *Protest*; however, the RFQ Coordinator will forward a copy of the complaint to the DSHS ESA Key Contracts Coordinators. Should an Applicant complaint identify a change that would be in the best interest of the DSHS to make, DSHS may modify this RFQ accordingly. The DSHS decision is final; no further administrative appeal is available.

11. RFQ Amendments. DSHS reserves the right, at any time before execution of a contract, to amend all, or a portion, of this RFQ. Amendments will be posted on the DSHS Procurements Web site and/or WEBS. If there is any conflict between amendments or between an amendment and this document, whichever document was issued last in time shall be controlling.

12. Retraction of this RFQ. DSHS reserves the right to retract this RFQ in whole, or in part, at any time without penalty.

13. Submission of Application. Applications must be sent to the RFQ Coordinator, either by mail, hand delivery, email, or fax at the address specified in Section B.1, *Procurement Contact Information*. All Applications and any accompanying documentation becomes the property of DSHS and will not be returned. DSHS assumes no responsibility for delays caused by Applicant's email, network problems or any other party.

14. Non-responsive Applications. All Applications will be reviewed by the RFQ Coordinator to determine compliance with administrative requirements and instructions specified in this RFQ. DSHS may reject or withdraw an Application at any time as non-responsive for any of the following reasons:

a. Incomplete Application

b. Submission of an Application that proposes services that deviate from the requirements set forth in this document

c. Failure to comply with any part of this RFQ or any exhibit to this RFQ

d. Submission of incorrect, misleading, or false information

15. Minor Irregularities. DSHS may waive minor administrative irregularities related to any Application.

16. Cost to Prepare Application. DSHS will not be liable for any costs incurred by the Applicant in preparing, submitting, or presenting an Application for this RFQ.

17. Exhibits to this RFQ are:

Exhibit A – Application Checklist

Exhibit B – Applicant Certification and Assurances Form

Exhibit C – Contractor Intake Form

Exhibit D – Sample Contract – Specialized Psychological Consultative Services

Exhibit E – Federal Background Authorization Forms

Applicants should download a complete copy of this RFQ and all attached exhibits, as listed above. The procurement documents can be accessed at http://www.dshs.wa.gov/fsa/central-contract-services/procurements-and-contracting or WEBS at https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/webs/. Applicants who experience difficulty downloading the documents should contact the RFQ Coordinator.

18. Withdrawal of Applications. After an Application has been submitted, an Applicant may withdraw its Application at any time. A written request to withdraw the Application, signed by an authorized representative of the Applicant, must be submitted to the RFQ Coordinator. After withdrawing an Application, an Applicant may submit another Application at any time.

19. Notification of Apparently Successful Applicants.

a. DSHS shall notify Apparently Successful Applicants with forty-five (45) business days after receipt of the properly completed Application. Notifications will be in writing or emailed and will include the Contract for the Applicant's signature.

b. DSHS shall notify Apparently Unsuccessful Applicants by letter or email within forty-five (45) business days after receipt of the properly completed Application.

20. Apparently Unsuccessful Applicant Debriefing Conference.

a. All Applicants may request a debriefing conference by submitting a request in writing to the RFQ Coordinator by mail or email within three (3) business days from the date of the letter.

b. A debriefing conference will be held within five (5) business days after receipt of the debriefing request, if requested.

c. A debriefing conference will be conducted by telephone and is limited to a maximum of one hour in length.

d. Discussion at the debriefing conference will be limited to the review of the Applicant's Application based on qualification requirements and prior contract performance (if applicable).

DSHS will not identify the other Applicants or allow review of their Applications or application review during debriefing.

21. Protest. In order to Submit a Protest under this RFQ, an Applicant must have submitted an Application for this RFQ, and must have requested and participated in a debriefing

conference. This protest process is the sole administrative remedy available within DSHS. The following is the process for filing a Protest:

a. Grounds for Protest. A Protest may be made based on these grounds only:

   (1) DSHS failed to follow the procedures established in this RFQ document, or to follow applicable State or federal laws or regulations; or

   (2) Bias, discrimination, or conflict of interest on the part of an evaluator.

b. Protest Form and Content. A Protest must state all of the facts and arguments upon which the Protest is based, and the grounds for the Protest. It must be in writing and signed by a person authorized to bind the Applicant to a contractual relationship. At a minimum, the Protest must include:

   (1) The name of the protesting Applicant, mailing address and phone number, and the name of the individual responsible for submission of the Protest;

   (2) The RFQ number and title;

   (3) A detailed and complete statement of the specific action(s) by DSHS under protest;

   (4) The grounds for the Protest; and

   (5) Description of the relief or corrective action requested.

   Applicants may attach to their Protest any documentation they have to offer in support.

c. Submitting a Protest. Protests must be in writing and must be signed. Applicants must mail or hand-deliver their Protest to the RFQ Coordinator. Protests may not be submitted by fax or email. DSHS must receive the written Protest within five (5) business days after the debriefing conference**.**

d. Protest Process. The RFQ Coordinator will forward the Protest to the DSHS designated Protest Coordinator with copies of the following:

   (1) This RFQ and any amendments;

   (2) The protesting Applicant's Application; and

   (3) Any other documents of the Application in question.

   DSHS will follow these procedures in reviewing a Protest:

   (1) DSHS will conduct an objective review of the Protest, based on the contents of the written Protest and the above materials provided by the RFQ Coordinator.

   (2) DSHS will send the Protestor a written decision within five (5) business days after DSHS receives the Protest, unless more time is required to review the Protest and make a determination. The protesting Applicant will be notified by the RFQ Coordinator if additional time is necessary.

DSHS will make a final determination of the Protest and will either:

(1) Find that the Protest lacks merit and uphold DSHS's actions;

(2) Find that any errors in the RFQ process or in DSHS's conduct did not influence the outcome of the RFQ, and uphold DSHS's actions; or

(3) Find merit in the Protest and provide options for corrective action by DSHS which may include:

(a) That DSHS correct any errors and re-evaluate all Applications affected by its determination of the Protest;

(b) That DSHS reissue the RFQ document; or

(c) That DSHS make other findings and take such other action as may be appropriate.

22. Execution of the Contract.

a. Apparently Successful Applicants are expected to sign a contract with DSHS and any subsequent amendments that may be required to address specific work or services as needed. A sample contract is attached as Exhibit D.

b. If the Apparently Successful Applicant fails or refuses to sign the Contract or any subsequent amendment within ten (10) business days of delivery, DSHS may elect to cancel the award

c. Any subcontracts necessary to perform the contract shall be subject to the prior written approval of DSHS.

d. If at contract award or anytime thereafter, any specifically named individual(s) in the Application to work on this engagement are not available, DSHS has the right to approve or reject any change in Contractor personnel.

SECTION C. APPLICATION CONTENTS

The Applicant must answer all questions and must include all items requested in the order requested for the Application to be considered responsive. The Applicant must address every section of this RFQ.

1. Administrative Requirements. Applicants wishing to provide services as a provider under the terms and conditions of this RFQ must:

a. Review all of the enclosed material.

b. Submit completed required documents and copies of additional required documentation to the appropriate RFQ Coordinator identified on page 1 of this RFQ.

c. Submit the following regarding Prior Contract Performance:

(1) Full details of all Terminations for Default that have been experienced by the Applicant in the past five (5) years, including the other party's name, address, and telephone number.

"Termination for Default" is defined as notice to Applicant to stop performance due to the Applicant's non-performance or poor performance and the issue was either: (a) not litigated; or (b) litigated and such litigation determined the Applicant to be in default.

(2) Description of the deficiencies in performance, and describe whether and how the deficiencies were remedied. Applicants must present any other information pertinent to its position on the matter.

DSHS will evaluate the information and may, at its sole discretion, reject the Applicant's Application if the information indicates that completion of a Contract or Statement of Work resulting from this RFQ may be jeopardized by selection of the Applicant.

2. Application Requirements. Please respond to each item in the same order in which they appear.

a. Complete and submit the following:

(1) Exhibit A – Application Checklist

(2) Exhibit B – Applicant Certification and Assurances Form

(3) Exhibit C – Contractor Intake Form

(4) Exhibit E – DSHS Background Authorization Form

b. Provide a current copy of the professional or medical license in the State of Washington.

c. Provide a current copy of the State of Washington Business License (UBI number).

d. Provide a Curriculum Vitae (CV)/Resume. The CV/Resume must detail experience with the required skills listed in Section A.4, *Qualification Requirements*, of this RFQ.

SECTION D. CONTRACT AWARD

1. Contract Award.

a. At the sole discretion of DSHS, DSHS shall designate an individual or team to evaluate Applications.

b. DSHS may consider past or current performance of any DSHS contracts by an Applicant, and any experience of the program or DSHS in working with an Applicant under any past or current contract with DSHS.

c. All Applicants may be subject to an interview, with the exception of Medical Consultants who have held or hold a Contract in good standing.

d. Applicants awarded a Contract shall be officially notified as Apparently Successful Applicants.

2. Notification of Apparently Successful Applicants.

a. DSHS shall notify Apparently Successful Applicants within forty-five (45) business days after receipt of the properly completed Application. Notifications will be in writing and will include the Contract for the Applicant's signature.

b. DSHS shall notify Apparently Unsuccessful Applicants by letter within forty-five (45) business days after receipt of the properly completed Application.