

## **Information Technology Professional Services (ITPS)**

Second-Tier Solicitation #1559-563 (Work Request)





**Washington State Department of Social and Health Services**

ITPS Second-Tier Solicitation (Work Request)

**Solicitation Number: ITPS #1559-563**

**Project Name: QA Specialist for Client Receivable System (CRS) Replacement Project**

This is a second-tier solicitation pursuant to Washington State Department of Enterprise Services (DES) Information Technology Professional Services (ITPS) program.

**THIS SOLICITATION REQUIRES ALL BIDDERS TO HAVE A CURRENT MASTER CONTRACT WITH DES FOR THE IT SERVICE CATEGORY SPECIFIED BELOW. SEE ELIGIBILITY.** All rights and obligations of the parties are subject to and governed by the terms of the ITPS master contract with DES including any subsequent modifications incorporated herein. DES assumes no responsibility for executing master contracts with companies prior to the closing date of this or any solicitation and will not modify the evaluation schedule.

<p><b><u>Schedule</u></b></p> <p><b>Date Issued: September 21, 2015</b></p> <p><b>Questions Due: September 28, 2015, 3pm PST</b></p> <p><b>Answers Published: September 30, 2015</b></p> <p><b>Complaints Due: October 7, 2015</b></p> <p><b>Proposals Due: October 14, 2015, 3pm PST</b></p> <p><b>Oral Interviews (if required): October 29, 2015</b></p> <p><b><u>Estimated Performance Period</u></b></p> <p><b>From December 1, 2015 to November 30, 2017</b></p> <p><b><u>Solicitation Coordinator</u></b></p> <p><b>Name: Sarah Pendleton</b></p> <p><b>Title: Agency IT Contracts Manager</b></p> <p><b>Phone: (360) 664-6050</b></p> <p><b>Email: sarah.pendleton@dshs.wa.gov</b></p>	<p><b><u>ITPS Category Number / Title</u></b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 04113 - IT Funding and Financial Analysis</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 05613 - IT Business Analysis</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 05813 - COOP &amp; Disaster Recovery</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3. External IT QA and IV&amp;V</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4. IT Project Management</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5. Technology Architecture Planning &amp; Dev.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 6. Security Analysis</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 7. Enterprise Content Management</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 9. Systems Analysis</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 10. Network &amp; System Administration</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 11. Software Quality Assurance &amp; Testing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 12. Desktop Applications Development &amp; Training</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 13. Geographic Information Systems Application Dev.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 14. Workstation Installation &amp; Support</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 15. Client Server, Web &amp; N-Tier Application Dev.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 16. General Mainframe Development</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 17. General DB Administrator / DB Dev. / Data Analyst</p>
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# 1 ITPS PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

<p><b>Overview</b></p>	<p>The ITPS program is a two-tiered competitive solicitation program for different categories of IT services in which vendors are first prequalified by IT service category. Once prequalified in a category, a vendor becomes eligible to submit proposals for separately solicited project work <b>FOR THAT CATEGORY ONLY</b>. DES coordinates the prequalification activities.</p> <p>A competitive solicitation is defined as a documented formal process providing an equal and open opportunity to bidders and culminating in a selection based on predetermined criteria.</p> <p>There are two separate solicitations utilized in the program:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>First-Tier: Prequalification</u>. Coordinated by DES.</li> <li>2. <u>Second-Tier: Project Work</u>. Separately coordinated by state agency purchasers for the actual work.</li> </ol> <p>Solicitation documents are posted to Washington State's enterprise vendor registration and bid notification system (currently Washington's Electronic Business Solution or WEBS). Companies must be registered in WEBS in order to compete for solicitations. View <u><a href="#">WEBS registration and search tips</a></u>. Questions about the registration process may be directed to <u><a href="mailto:WEBSCustomerService@des.wa.gov">WEBSCustomerService@des.wa.gov</a></u> or (360) 902-7400, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday – Friday.</p>
<p><b>First-Tier: Prequalification</b></p>	<p>DES prequalifies companies by category using the following first-tier solicitation process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) DES develops mandatory requirements and evaluation criteria for prequalification in each ITPS category.</li> <li>2) The requirements and criteria are then detailed in solicitations BY CATEGORY which are posted to WEBS.</li> </ol> <p>For a first-tier prequalification schedule and status of categories, see the ITPS <u><a href="#">webpage</a></u>. If a category's solicitation status is anything other than "posted", it is not currently posted in WEBS (i.e. terminated, terminating, closed, in development, to be developed).</p> <p>For posted first-tier solicitations, go to WEBS.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3) Bidders attempt to prequalify BY CATEGORY by responding to the solicitations.</li> <li>4) DES evaluates responses and negotiates master contracts BY CATEGORY with bidders who meet the requirements of the solicitations.</li> <li>5) Companies with DES master contracts are then listed on the applicable prequalified lists BY CATEGORY within WEBS for state agency purchasers to use when soliciting for their project work.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Second-Tier: Project Work</b></p>	<p>State agency purchasers separately coordinate solicitations for their projects using the following second-tier solicitation process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) A purchaser determines which ITPS category is applicable to its project and develops requirements and evaluation criteria for a solicitation.</li> <li>2) The solicitation is then SELECTIVELY posted to WEBS ONLY TO THE APPLICABLE CATEGORY (prequalified list in WEBS); not to individual commodity</li> </ol>

	<p>codes.</p> <p>Note: Only companies who are prequalified for the specified category should receive the solicitation. Accordingly, the purchaser will only entertain proposals from companies who are prequalified in the specified category.</p> <p>3) The purchaser evaluates proposals and awards the work to the prequalified bidder who best meets the solicitation’s requirements.</p> <p>Note: DES assumes no responsibility for prequalifying a company/individual prior to the closing date of a second-tier solicitation and will not modify the evaluation schedule.</p>
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## 2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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### 2.1 Background

The Office of Financial Recovery (OFR) collects funds due to the state, also known as “receivables,” in the Client Receivable System (CRS). This is money owed by clients to the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and the Department of Early Learning (DEL) for various types of overpayments. As of 2014, the CRS is 23 years old and has never been upgraded.

Two major issues exist within the current CRS system:

First, system failures are frequent and costly. During Fiscal Year 2014, two components of the system failed – the Treasury Offset Program (TOP) CRS interface, and the Recoupments system. The TOP/CRS interface allows OFR to refer client food stamp debts to the federal Department of the Treasury to collect the debt via interception of Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax refunds. The TOP/CRS interface has been repaired, but OFR is uncertain about how well it will function during the 2016 tax season, when the bulk of federal TOP referrals occur. TOP/CRS collections dropped by 42 percent, from Fiscal Year 2013 to Fiscal Year 2014 as a result of the failures of the TOP/CRS interface.

Recoupments are offsets of current public assistance funds paid to clients. For example, a common recoupment might be a food stamp grant of \$200 per month reduced by \$10 per month to pay off an overpayment. Recoupment revenue declined by 36 percent from Fiscal Year 2013 to Fiscal Year 2014 related directly to this system failure.

The second issue is the lack of needed functionality to support debt collections. The current system does not have basic case management capacity, cannot generate summary reports, and cannot be used to send bills. The existing system is difficult for staff to learn and navigate.

### 2.2 Location

The majority of work is expected to be performed at the Contractor’s office. However, a hotel cubical is available at Division of Child Support for times when a Quality Assurance (QA) staff person is required to be on-site. The location of the temporary hotel cubical is located at 712 Pear Street SE, Olympia WA.

### 2.3 Scope of Work

OFR is requesting QA vendor resource (either a single resource or a team resource with one assigned person with primary responsibility) to provide ongoing advice and counsel on the CRS replacement project. The QA services provider will be responsible for making recommendations to the DSHS Economic Services Administration (ESA) Executive Sponsor, ESA Project Sponsor, and the Contracted CRS Replacement Project Manager. It is estimated that services provided by this QA Vendor would be a maximum of 20-30 hours per month on average.

The QA services will provide independent and objective reviews of the CRS Replacement Project, its progress, and any difficulties, including, but not limited to, an assessment of the quality of deliverables. The QA Vendor will be a common source of reliable independent information to those charged with the oversight of project.

The QA Vendor will perform periodic reviews, analyses, and provide written feedback of the Project, and related activities. The Vendor will be expected to assure that effective project planning, management, risk assessment, and project controls are being applied for project success.

The QA Vendor will provide, at minimum, bi-monthly reports to the CRS replacement project ESA executive sponsor, to the OFR Chief, and to the CRS Replacement Contracted Project Manager. The frequency of meetings may be adjusted based on project activities.

**QA Scope of Work Requirements include:**

- Completeness of vision and scope definition  
Do all participants (customers, development team and executives) have a unified understanding of the vision and scope of the project? Is the project adhering to that vision/scope? Are project objectives clear and well understood?
- Adequacy of risks assessments and mitigation plans  
Are risks being systematically identified and planned for? Are business processes and policy changes being adequately addressed?
- Adequacy of staffing and role definition.  
Is the project adequately staffed and do the team members understand their roles and responsibilities? Are team members adequately trained?
- Adequacy of work/task planning  
Is a realistic project plan being maintained and followed? Are products being delivered on schedule? Are costs within budget? Do team members understand the plan?
- Adequacy of project control procedures  
Are we using effective techniques for scope/change management, issue resolution, project communications, status assessment, and reporting?
- Constructive involvement of customers  
Is OFR staff adequately involved in the project planning, development, acceptance and delivery? Is the project maintaining the proper balance between agency needs and OFR needs?
- Adequacy of product design  
Are sound design principles being applied to the product design? Are appropriate technology solutions being applied? Will the product scale to statewide deployment? Is their adequate time in the plan to change policy? Are the impacts of policy changes and time implement policy changes for agencies being included in plans?
- Work product assessment  
Are the work products (programs, documentation, training, installations, etc.) of good quality? Are the work products meeting the customers' needs? Have they been adequately tested?

**2.4 Period of Performance**

The term of the resulting contract (Work Order) will be for approximately two (2) years

commencing on 12/1/2015 or upon the execution date, whichever is later, until 11/30/2017. Amendments extending the period of performance, if any, shall be at the sole discretion of DSHS.

The term of the contract (Work Order) may be extended by amendment for an additional two (2) year period.

### **Quality Assurance Specialist Qualifications**

#### **Mandatory Requirements:**

- Have a minimum of five (5) years' experience performing Quality Assurance (QA) for complex projects which crossed multiple organizations and involved multiple applications. Bidders' experience must include at least three (3) successful technology projects where the project was completed on-time and on-budget. Two (2) of the above projects must have been for Government Agencies.
- Have Key Personnel who each have a minimum of three (3) years QA experience within the past five (5) years.
- Commit to Key Personnel, as identified in the Bidder's Response, who will be available to work within thirty (30) business days after the resulting Work Order/Contract is executed, and perform the assigned work, should the Bidder be identified as the Apparent Successful Bidder.
- Have experience managing information systems projects consistent with the OCIO Information Technology Project Management Policy, and OCIO Project Management Framework (Guidelines).
- Have experience with project status reporting and executive sponsor briefing.

#### **Desirable Experience:**

- Be familiar with the Operation of Washington State Government.
- Have experience providing quality assurance consultation for cross functional (or multi agency) projects with varying levels of project management maturity.
- Have knowledge of change management, policy development, and integration, for major IT implementations.
- Have experience providing Quality Assurance Assessments for an enterprise initiative.
- Have experience providing Quality Assurance Assessments for projects of a similar size.

## **2.5 Deliverables**

### **General Deliverable Requirements**

The Contractor shall provide the following Deliverables and Services:

1. Develop and present a Quality Assurance Plan to the CRS replacement project manager for approval. The Quality Assurance Plan should include descriptions of how the QA Vendor will deliver its services.

2. Propose a Work Plan for the Initial QA Assessment and subsequent Periodic Assessments including schedule and estimated hours necessary to conduct and prepare these deliverables
3. Report and present Periodic Assessments to CRS Replacement Project sponsors. These assessments shall include high level project status, quality, issues, risks, findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The assessments will be based on the previous period and updated Work Plan for the ensuing period for approval on a monthly basis. See OCIO standards at <https://ocio.wa.gov/policies/121-it-investments-approval-and-oversight/121-procedures>, for required content (see Appendix G).
4. Hold monthly meetings with the ESA Executive Sponsors, Project Director, OCIO project oversight consultant, OFR Project Manager, and key stakeholders, as identified during assessments to review Project Assessments, issues, and risks.
5. Interview project team members and other key project stakeholders, at least quarterly, and report on findings to the Executive Sponsors. This can be a written report or a verbal report.
6. Provide periodic assistance in the facilitation of project planning activities as identified in the completed Periodic Assessments.
7. Develop a Post Implementation Report in collaboration with the OFR project manager (or delegate).

**Initial and Periodic Assessment Deliverable Requirements:**

The Initial and Periodic Assessments shall address, but should not be limited to, the following:

1. Adequacy of executive awareness of the project. Do executives understand the issues and risks facing the project? Does the project have an active, involved executive sponsors?
2. Completeness of vision and scope definition. Do all participants (customers, project team and executives) have a unified understanding of the vision and scope of the project? Is the project adhering to that vision/scope? Are project objectives clear and well understood?
3. Adequacy of risks assessments and mitigation plans. Are risks being systematically identified and planned for the project?
4. Adequacy of staffing and role definition. Is the project adequately staffed and does the staff understand their roles and responsibilities? Is staff adequately trained?
5. Adequacy of work/task planning. Is the project following a disciplined approach? Is a realistic project plan being maintained and followed? Are products being delivered on schedule? Are costs within budget? Does staff understand the plan?
6. Adequacy of project control procedures. Are adequate measures/techniques in place for scope/change management, issue resolution, project communications, status assessment and reporting?
7. Effectiveness of interagency team collaboration. Are team members across agencies communicating effectively? Are decisions made for the good of the project as a whole?

8. Constructive involvement of customers. Are stakeholders or customers adequately involved in the project planning, development, acceptance and delivery?
9. Work product assessment. Are the work products of good quality? If necessary, has OFR staff had sufficient involvement in the work product?

### **Deliverable Review and Approval**

Deliverables are subject to review and approval prior to payment. Deliverables shall be presented to the DCS IT Business Operations Manager for approval. The Agency requires a minimum five (5) working-day review period for acceptance of Deliverables. Documents must be delivered in electronic format using Microsoft Office 2007 and will follow a template conforming to DCS documentation standards.

### **2.6 Additional Expectations**

A security badge is required and will be provided to the Contractor for access into the work area and for agency computer access when necessary. The Contractor will be required to complete a non-disclosure agreement and annual Security Awareness training prior to starting work. If on-site work is required, the Contractor can be provided with a hotel cubical during regular business hours (8 am to 4 pm).

## **3 REQUIRED SUBMITTALS**

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For definitions of MR (Mandatory Requirements) and SR (Scored Requirements) see Section 5.

The Bidder must include the signature of an authorized Bidder representative on all documents requiring a signature. Proposals which do not include any of the following required submittals will be rejected and disqualified from the solicitation process as “non-responsive”.

### **3.1 Administrative Requirements (Not Scored)**

The Bidder must respond to each item **in the same order in which they appear below.**

#### **3.1.1. Letter of Submittal**

Bidders must include a signed Letter of Submittal on Bidder’s official business letterhead stationery as the first page of the proposal. Signing the Letter of Submittal indicates that the Bidder accepts the terms and conditions of this Work Request.

#### **The Bidder’s Letter of Submittal must include the following:**

- (1) Name, address, principal place of business, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address of legal entity or individual with whom contract (work order) would be written;
- (2) The name of the contact person for this Work Request;
- (3) A detailed list of all materials and enclosures included in the Proposal;
- (4) A list of all work request amendments downloaded by the Bidder from the DSHS Procurements Web site and/or WEBS, if applicable, and listed in order by amendment number and date. If there are no work request amendments, the Bidder must include a statement to that effect;
- (5) A statement substantiating that the person who signs the letter is authorized to contractually bind the Bidder’s firm;

- (6) Identification of the page numbers on the Bidder's Proposal that are marked "Proprietary or Confidential" Information (See Section 8.6 for more details);
- (8) Any and all exceptions and/or revisions to the attached sample contract (Work Order). *Simply replacing the entirety of DSHS' sample contract (Work Order) language with Vendor contract language will not suffice and could be considered non-responsive. DSHS will not consider changes to contract language or negotiate any new language that is submitted after the Bidder's response.*
- (7) A list identifying any current or former state employees who are employed by, or subcontracted with, Bidder;
- 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 services under a contract resulting from this solicitation
  - If the Bidder has no employees or subcontractors that are current or former employees of the state of Washington, then the Letter of Submittal must so state; and
- (8) Any statements describing variations between the Bidder's Proposal and the requirements of this Work Request;
- (9) Prior Contract Performance.
- Bidders must submit full details of all Terminations for Default that have been experienced by the Bidder in the past five (5) years, including the other party's name, address, and telephone number
  - "Termination for Default" is defined as notice to Bidder to stop performance due to the Bidder's non-performance or poor performance and the issue was either: (a) not litigated; or (b) litigated and such litigation determined the Bidder to be in default
  - Bidders must describe the deficiencies in performance, and describe whether and how the deficiencies were remedied. Bidders must present any other information pertinent to its position on the matter. Bidders must present any such information in its completion of the Bidder's Letter of Submittal
  - DSHS will evaluate the information and may, at its sole discretion, reject the Bidder's proposal if the information indicates that completion of a Contract or Work Order resulting from this Work Request may be jeopardized by selection of the Bidder. If the Bidder has experienced no such Terminations for Default in the past five years, the Bidder must so declare in the Bidder's Letter of Submittal
- (10) A statement confirming that the Bidder holds a valid business license, or is committed to becoming licensed within thirty (30) days of being determined the Apparent Successful Bidder, or be authorized to do business in Washington State.

### 3.1.2 Bidder Certification and Assurances Form

Bidder must submit a completed Bidder Certification and Assurances Form, Exhibit A. Please sign and include any other attachments that are necessary.

**3.1.3 Reference Section**

Either in the Letter of Submittal, or in a separate document, the Bidder must provide a list of at least three (3) references to include no less than (2) Government Contracts for which the Bidder has performed similar services. The references should include the names, telephone numbers, dates of services, and a brief description of the similar services the Bidder provided them in the past. If DSHS chooses to check references, references they will only be contacted for finalist(s).

**3.2 Price Worksheet (30 points possible)**

Submit your hourly rate in the following format. Keep in mind that the hours worked per month may not exceed 30 hours. Bidders will be expected to provide approximately 20-30 hours of services per month. However, the Contractor is not guaranteed 20-30 hours per month (the number may increase or decrease based on DSHS' need).

The proposed hourly rate must not exceed the rate proposed by the Bidder and accepted by the State of Washington under DES ITPS Category 3 under which this Work Request is being released.

Name of Vendor	Most competitive hourly rate

- Expectation: One separate, scanned email attachment labeled in accordance with the file naming convention specified below.
- Required Format: MS Word
- File naming convention: BidderName\_PRICE\_WORKSHEET.docx.

**3.3 Non-Cost Submittals (SCORED)**

**3.3.1 Executive Summary (10 points possible)**

The executive summary should describe the Bidder's response at a high level in terms of engagement approach, perspective, skill levels, and overall work description. It should demonstrate that the Bidder understands the scope and objectives of the engagement.

**3.3.2 Experience and Qualifications (75 TOTAL points possible)**

**3.3.2.1 Mandatory Requirements and Desired Experience and Qualifications**

Provide a resume for the proposed developer/staff, which includes information on the individual's particular skills and qualifications related to this engagement, education, mandatory and desired experience, significant accomplishments and other pertinent information.

**3.3.2.1.1 Mandatory Requirements and Qualifications (50 points possible/10 points possible per qualification)**

Separate from the submitted resume, provide examples and detailed explanation of the how each of the mandatory

experience and qualification requirements are met as laid out in Section 2.5. *If no experience in a requested qualification, it should be noted as such in the response.*

3.3.2.1.2 Desired Experience and Qualifications (25 points possible/5 points possible per qualification)

Separate from the submitted resume, provide examples and detailed explanation of how each of the desired qualification requirements are met as laid out in Section 2.5. *If no experience in a requested qualification, it should be noted as such in the response.*

## 4 DELIVERY OF PROPOSALS

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### 4.1 Delivery Method

#### 4.1.1 Submission of Proposal

Proposals must be prepared and submitted in their entirety no later than the proposal submission date and time specified in the Schedule, on the first page of this Work Request. The Proposal must be sent to the Solicitation Coordinator electronically as an attachment to an email using the email address specified on the first page of this Work Request.

The email subject line must identify the email as “Response to Work Request # 1559-563.”

All Proposals and any accompanying documentation and material become the property of DSHS and will not be returned.

Acceptable Electronic Formats (Software) for Submission of Offers

- (1) Files must be formatted in Portable Document Format (Adobe Acrobat PDF) or Microsoft Office XP and lower versions of Microsoft Word, Excel, or PowerPoint.
- (2) Spreadsheet documents must be submitted in Microsoft Excel and in a live, unprotected file that includes all formulas, macros, and computations that are relied on or used to calculate any rates or values presented therein.
- (3) When scanning documents to be submitted in PDF format, scanner resolution should be set to at least 200 dots per inch.
- (4) Other electronic format. If you wish to submit an offer using any format other than described here, e-mail the Solicitation Coordinator who issued the solicitation. Please submit your request at least ten (10) calendar days before the scheduled closing date of the solicitation. Request a decision as to the format acceptability and make sure you receive approval of the alternate format before using it to send your proposal.
- (5) Please note that we cannot accept compressed or “.zip” files due to security concerns.

**NOTE: DSHS cannot receive emails that are larger than 30MB. To keep file sizes to a minimum, Bidders are cautioned not to use unnecessary graphics in their**

**proposal. If your Proposal approaches or exceeds 30MB, you must break it up and send it by more than one email so that no single email exceeds 30MB.**

#### **4.1.2 Format of Proposal**

- (1) The Bidder must use a font size of 12 or larger.
- (2) Proposals must address the sections of this Work Request in the same order as presented here, with the same headings.

#### **4.2 Due Date and Time**

Proposals in their entirety must be received by the solicitation coordinator by the due date and time as indicated on the first page of this Work Request. Late proposals will be rejected as non-responsive and will be disqualified.

- The "receive date/time" posted by the DSHS email system will be used as the official time stamp.
- Bidders should allow sufficient time to ensure timely receipt.
- DSHS assumes no responsibility for delays and or errors caused by bidder's e-mail, DSHS' email, network events or any other party.

## **5 EVALUATION AND AWARD**

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To aid in the evaluation process, after the due date and time, DSHS may require individual bidders to appear at a date, time and place determined by DSHS for the purpose of conducting discussions to determine whether both parties have a full and complete understanding of the nature and scope of contractual requirements. In no manner shall such action be construed as negotiations or an indication of DSHS' intention to award.

During evaluation, DSHS reserves the right to make reasonable inquiry to determine the responsibility of any bidder. Requests may include, but are not limited to, financial statements, credit ratings, references, record of past performance, clarification of Bidder's offer, and on-site inspection of bidder's or bidder's subcontractor's facilities. Failure to respond to said request(s) may result in a proposal being rejected as non-responsive.

Bidders whose proposals are determined to be non-responsive will be disqualified and will be notified of the reasons for such disqualification.

#### **5.1 Award Criteria**

Award will be based on the following criteria and will be in accordance with provisions identified in [RCW 39.26.160](#) and other criteria identified in the solicitation.

DSHS reserves the right to use references to confirm satisfactory customer service, performance, satisfaction with service/product, knowledge of products/service/industry and timeliness; any negative or unsatisfactory response may be an adequate reason for rejecting a bidder as non-responsive and unable to suit the needs of the state. DSHS reserves the right to waive a reference check. Bidders deemed non-responsive may be rejected.

#### **5.1.2 Mandatory and Desired Qualification Scoring Requirements**

##### **5.1.1.1 Mandatory Requirements**

A mandatory requirement is an essential DSHS need that must be met by the Bidder.

Mandatory requirements are scored as pass or fail based on the presence of the required experience.

Mandatory requirements will also be scored with a numeric score (from 0-10) based on the quality of the staff experience and the duration of the experience.

Bidder/Staff not fulfilling ALL mandatory requirements will be disqualified from the solicitation process.

#### 5.1.1.2 Desired Qualifications

A Desired qualification is a desired skill or ability that DSHS would like to see met by the Bidder.

Bidders are required to respond to all scored requirements, even if the proposed Vendor/Staff does not meet a particular desired qualification (in which case the Bidder should notate the lack of a desired qualification).

Scored/desired requirements will also be scored with a numeric score (from 0-5) based on the quality of the staff experience and the duration of the experience.

It is in the Bidder's best interest to be thorough and fully responsive in preparing responses. Failure of the Bidder to respond to any one scored requirement will result in the Bidder receiving a score of zero (0) or no score for that unanswered item.

## 5.2 Evaluation Points for Non-Cost Submittals

5.2.2 The evaluation for the non-cost submittals will be based only upon the response and not on external experience with, or perception of, the Bidder.

5.2.3 Scored items will be awarded points by each evaluator (see listing below). Points will be assigned based upon the evaluator's interpretation of the Bidder's response to each requirement.

5.2.4 The evaluation teams will score independently of other teams. Upon completion, the scores will be given to the Solicitation Coordinator. Scoring will be based upon a scale of zero (0) to ten (10) for the **Executive Summary**, and the **Mandatory Requirements**, with those scores being defined as follows:

Score	Description	Discussion
9-10	Exceptional	Feature or capability is clearly superior to that which is average.
7-8	Above Average	Feature or capability is better than that which is average.
5-6	Average	This is the baseline score for each item with adjustments based upon the evaluator's interpretation of the Bidder's response.
3-4	Below Average	Feature or capability is substandard to that which is average.

1-2	Failing	Feature or capability is non-responsive or clearly inadequate to that which is average.
0	No Experience	Response shows no experience in this skill or capability.

5.2.5 The evaluation teams will score independently of other teams. Upon completion the scores will be given to the Solicitation Coordinator. Scoring will be based upon a scale of zero (0) to five (5) for the **Desired Qualifications**, with those scores being defined as follows:

Score	Description	Discussion
5	Exceptional	Feature or capability is clearly superior to that which is average.
4	Above Average	Feature or capability is better than that which is average.
3	Average	This is the baseline score for each item with adjustments based upon the evaluator's interpretation of the Bidder's response.
2	Below Average	Feature or capability is substandard to that which is average.
1	Failing	Feature or capability is non-responsive or clearly inadequate to that which is average.
0	No Experience	Response shows no experience in this skill or capability.

5.2.6 Score weighting for each section out of the total possible points are as follows:  
The maximum TOTAL point possible for this solicitation is: **145**

	Preliminary Score Requirements/Criteria	Points Possible	Weight Assigned
1	Executive Summary	10	7%
2	Mandatory Requirements	50	34%
3	Desired Qualifications	25	17%
4	Oral Interview (Optional)	30	21%
4	Cost	30	21%

### 5.3 Evaluation Process

#### 5.3.2 Initial Determination of Responsiveness

Proposals will be reviewed initially by the solicitation coordinator and/or project manager to determine, on a pass/fail basis, whether each proposal meets all the administrative requirements specified herein. If any of the Required Submittals are not met, DSHS reserves the right to deem the Bidder “non-responsive” and disqualify the Bidder from the solicitation process.

DSHS reserves the right to determine at its sole discretion whether a bidder’s response to a mandatory requirement is sufficient to pass (see Section 5.1 Award Criteria). However, if all responding bidders fail to meet any single mandatory item, DSHS reserves the right, at its option, to either: (1) cancel the procurement, or (2) revise or delete the mandatory item.

#### 5.3.3 Cost Evaluation

This cost evaluation will focus on hourly rates.

The bidder with the lowest hourly rate will receive the maximum (30) cost evaluation points. Those proposals with higher hourly rates will receive proportionately fewer cost evaluation points based upon the lowest hourly rate.

The following table serves ONLY as an example:

<b>Bidder A:</b> (Lowest hourly rate)	<b>\$125.00 = 30 points</b> ↳ Winner receives all 30 available points
<b>Bidder B:</b> (2nd Lowest hourly rate)	\$145.00 $\$125 / 145 = .86 * 30 = 25.8$ Points <small>Lowest Bid / Higher Bid = Percentage of Available Points * Available Points = Points Awarded</small>

#### 5.3.4 Non-Cost Evaluation

A committee will evaluate non-cost submittals and assign scores as set forth herein.

The committee members need not award all possible points and will score the non-cost submittal consistent with their values and best professional judgment. The committee members will primarily focus on the considerations stated in the solicitation.

In addition to presiding over the evaluation committee, solicitation coordinator may review the non-cost submittals provide input, assemble evaluation aids, or perform other functions helpful to the evaluation committee. The committee may engage in a free flow of discussion with other committee members and the solicitation coordinator prior to, during, and after the evaluation.

The scoring of the questions may be performed in isolation or together as a group, or a combination of both. Each committee member will give a particular question a score utilizing the point system identified in the table above which has been established in accordance with primary stakeholder considerations.

All of the committee members’ scores for a question will be added together and then divided by the number of members to arrive at a total score for that question. This process will repeat for all questions.

### 5.3.5 Oral Interviews

DSHS may, after evaluating the written Proposals, elect to schedule oral presentations. The Solicitation Coordinator will notify finalists of the date, time, and location of the oral presentation. A tentative date is set in the included schedule.

DSHS will select evaluators for the oral presentations based on their qualifications, experience, and background relevant to this solicitation. These evaluators may include evaluators who reviewed the written Proposals or DSHS staff who will work with the successful Bidder. Evaluators will score oral presentations in accordance with the solicitation requirements.

### 5.3.6 Selection of Apparent Successful Bidders

To identify an Apparent Successful Bidder, each bidder's points earned from the cost evaluation and the non-cost evaluation will be added together as follows:

The following table serves ONLY as an example:

	Cost Factor Points	Non-Cost Factor Points	Oral Interview (Optional)	Total
<b>Bidder A</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>126</b>
Bidder B	<b>25.8</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>110.8</b>

The bidder with the highest number of total points will be declared the Apparent Successful Bidder. DSHS may then enter into contract negotiations with the Apparent Successful Bidder.

Designation as an Apparent Successful Bidder does not imply that the state will issue an award; it merely suggests that the state believes a proposal to be responsive and offer the best value to DSHS. This designation allows DSHS an opportunity to perform a responsibility analysis and ask for additional documentation. DSHS is also at liberty to re-review and determine whether a proposal is responsive as initially determined. Bidder must not construe the notification of award, impending award, or attempts to negotiate, etc. as a final award decision. Any assumptions are done so at the bidder's own risk and expense.

Should Contract negotiations fail to be completed within 30 days after initiation, DSHS may immediately cease Contract negotiations and declare the second lowest Bidder the new Apparent Successful Bidder and enter into Contract negotiations with that Bidder. This process will continue until a contract is signed or no qualified bidders remain.

## 5.4 Notification of Apparent Successful Bidders

All bidders responding to this solicitation will be notified when DSHS has determined the Apparent Successful Bidder(s). The date of announcement of the Apparent Successful Bidder will be the date of the notification as noted in the solicitation schedule.

## 5.5 Award Notification

After all considerations, all bidders responding to this solicitation will be notified when DSHS has confirmed its intent to award. An award notification will be sent out via WEBS, notifying all bidders.

The date of announcement of award will be the date of the notification as noted in the solicitation schedule.

An award, in part or full, is made by DSHS' signature on the DSHS' order document (second-tier contract) and accompanying award letter (if any) that is also delivered to the Apparent Successful Bidder. In some circumstances, DSHS may include an award letter which will accompany the signed copy of the second-tier contract; the award letter will further define the award and is included by reference.

## 6 BIDDER REQUIREMENTS

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### 6.1 Eligibility

A bidder must have a master contract with DES for the category specified on the cover page in order to submit a proposal to this solicitation.

The DES master contract must be current and bidders may be required to provide confirmation. Failure to provide confirmation upon request will result in rejection.

Note: DES assumes no responsibility for executing master contracts with companies prior to the closing date of this or any Solicitation and will not modify its evaluation schedule.

### 6.2 Washington's Electronic Business Solution (WEBS)

Bidders must be registered in Washington State's enterprise vendor registration and bid notification system (currently Washington's Electronic Business Solution or WEBS). See [WEBS registration and search tips](#). Questions about the registration process may be directed to [WEBSCustomerService@des.wa.gov](mailto:WEBSCustomerService@des.wa.gov) or (360) 902-7400, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday – Friday.

To ensure receipt of all solicitation documents, the documents for this solicitation must be downloaded from WEBS. Notification of solicitation amendments will only be provided to those bidders who have registered with WEBS and have downloaded the solicitation from WEBS. Failure to do so may result in a potential bidder having incomplete, inaccurate, or otherwise inadequate information, or a bidder submitting an incomplete, inaccurate, or otherwise inadequate proposal. Bidders accept full responsibility and liability for failing to receive any amendments resulting from their failure to register with WEBS and download the solicitation from WEBS, and hold DSHS harmless from all claims of injury or loss resulting from such failure.

Bidders are solely responsible for:

1. Properly registering with WEBS
2. Maintaining an accurate Bidder profile in WEBS
3. Downloading the solicitation consisting of the solicitation with all related attachments and exhibits for which you are interested in competing for
4. Downloading all current and subsequent solicitation amendments

## 7 ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

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### 7.1 Authorized Communication

All bidder communications concerning this solicitation must be directed to the solicitation coordinator. Unauthorized contact regarding this solicitation with other state employees involved with the solicitation may result in disqualification. All oral communications will be considered unofficial and non-binding on DSHS. Bidders should rely only on written statements issued by the solicitation coordinator, such as solicitation amendments.

### 7.2 Bidder Questions

Questions regarding this solicitation will be allowed consistent with the schedule. All questions must be submitted in writing to the solicitation coordinator.

DSHS will provide written answers for questions received by the question and answer period's deadline. Answers will be posted to WEBS.

Verbal responses to questions will not be provided. Only written answers posted to WEBS will be considered official and binding. Bidders will not be identified in answers.

When the question and answer period is complete, additional comments will be for the purpose of informing the solicitation coordinator of an issue only. Questions and comments outside the question and answer period will not be answered or acknowledged.

If interpretations or other changes to this solicitation are required as a result of inquiries made during the question and answer period, the solicitation may be amended. Amendments are posted to WEBS.

### 7.3 Complaints

#### 7.3.1 Complaints Generally

Issues or concerns not resolved to a bidder's satisfaction during a normal question and answer period or a pre-bid meeting may be addressed through a complaint only on the following grounds:

1. The solicitation unnecessarily restricts competition;
2. The evaluation or scoring process is unfair or flawed; or
3. The solicitation requirements are inadequate or insufficient to prepare a proposal.

A complaint must:

1. Be received by solicitation coordinator not less than five business days prior to the due date and time. Otherwise, an untimely complaint may be rejected without further consideration at the discretion of DSHS; and

2. Be in writing.

A complaint should:

1. Clearly articulate the basis of the complaint consistent with the compliant criteria; and
2. Include a proposed remedy.

Upon receipt of a timely complaint, DSHS will consider all the facts available and respond in writing prior to the due date and time.

The solicitation coordinator shall promptly post the proposal to a timely complaint on WEBS.

DSHS' response to the complaint is final and not subject to appeal although; the solicitation coordinator may issue further clarification if needed. Issues raised in a complaint may not be raised again during the protest period.

Failure to follow the complaint procedure described herein may be seen as a waiver on the part of the bidder and prevent the complaint from being honored and exercised.

### 7.3.2 Form and Substance

Complaints, must:

1. Be in writing (e-mail is acceptable);
2. Be submitted by an authorized agent of the Bidder;
3. Be delivered within the time frame(s) outlined herein;
4. Be sent to the solicitation coordinator identified in the solicitation;
5. Include solicitation identifiers (i.e. title and number) ;
6. Be clearly labeled as a "Complaint".

Additionally, all complaints must:

1. State all facts and arguments on which the Bidder is relying as the basis for its action; and
2. Include any supporting documentation.

## 7.4 Debriefs and Protests

### 7.4.2 Debriefs

A debriefing conference provides an opportunity for a bidder to meet with the solicitation coordinator to discuss the evaluation and scoring.

**Only bidders who have submitted timely proposals, and who have not been disqualified or designated as non-responsive during the solicitation process, may request debriefing conferences.**

Requests for debriefing conferences must be communicated in writing (email acceptable) to the solicitation coordinator within three (3) business days of the announcement of the Apparent Successful Bidder(s).

A debriefing conference may be conducted either in person or by telephone and may be limited to a specified period of time, as determined by the solicitation coordinator. Debriefing conferences may take place shortly following the request. Therefore, bidders should plan ahead and have alternate representatives available. The solicitation coordinator will not allow for lengthy delays nor allow debriefing conferences to be used as delay tactics.

The failure of a bidder to submit a timely request for and attend a debriefing conference shall constitute a waiver of the right to protest.

#### 7.4.3 Protests

**Only bidders who have submitted timely proposals and have had a debriefing conference may protest.**

Upon completion of a debriefing conference, a bidder is allowed five (5) business days to file a protest with the solicitation coordinator.

Protests may only be based on one or more of the following:

1. Bias, discrimination, or conflict of interest on the part of an evaluator;
2. Errors were made in computing the score;
3. DSHS failed to follow procedures established in the solicitation document.

A protest must:

1. Be submitted to and received by the solicitation coordinator, within five business days of the protesting bidder's debriefing conference;
2. Be in writing (e-mail is acceptable);
3. Include a specific and complete statement of facts forming the basis of the protest; and
4. Include a description of the relief or corrective action requested.

Upon receiving a protest, the solicitation coordinator will forward the protest and all relevant information to a neutral party which had no involvement with the solicitation process. This representative will conduct a review, and issue a written response within 10 business days of receipt of the protest, unless additional time is required. Should additional time be required, the protesting party will be notified.

The final determination of the protest will:

- Find the protest lacking in merit and uphold DSHS' action; or
- Find only technical or innocuous errors in the acquisition process and determine the DSHS to be in substantial compliance and reject the protest; or
- Find merit in the protest and provide options which may include:
  - Correcting the errors and re-evaluating all proposals, and/or
  - Reissuing the solicitation and beginning a new process, or
  - Making other findings and determining other courses of action as appropriate.

If DSHS determines that the protest is without merit, they will enter into a contract with the Apparent Successful Bidder(s). If the protest is determined to have merit, one of the alternatives noted in the preceding paragraph will be taken.

The protest decision is final and not subject to appeal. If the protesting bidder does not accept the agency protest decision, the bidder may seek relief in Superior Court.

#### 7.4.4 Form and Substance

Debrief requests and protests must:

1. Be in writing (e-mail is acceptable);
2. Be submitted by an authorized agent of the bidder;

3. Be delivered within the time frame(s) outlined herein;
4. Be sent to the solicitation coordinator identified in the solicitation;
5. Include solicitation identifiers (i.e. title and number) ;
6. Be clearly labeled as a “Debrief”, or “Protest”.

Additionally, all protests must:

1. State all facts and arguments on which the bidder is relying as the basis for its action;  
and
2. Include any supporting documentation.

A Bidder’s failure to follow debrief and protest procedures described herein may be seen as a waiver on the part of the bidder and prevent a debrief request or protest from being honored and exercised.

## **8 GENERAL INFORMATION**

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### **8.3 DSHS’ Option to Extend**

DSHS reserves the right to extend the second-tier contract (order document) issued under this solicitation for a two (2) year period via Amendment at DSHS’ option.

### **8.4 Right to Cancel**

DSHS reserves the right to cancel or reissue all or part of this solicitation at any time as allowed by law without obligation or liability.

### **8.5 Information Availability**

In accordance with [RCW 39.26.030\(2\)](#), Proposal contents (including pricing information) and evaluations are exempt from disclosure until DSHS announces an Apparent Successful Bidder.

### **8.6 Proprietary or Confidential Information**

All proposals submitted become the property of DSHS and a matter of public record after DSHS announces Apparent Successful Bidder(s).

Any information contained in the proposal that is proprietary or confidential must be clearly designated. Marking of the entire proposal or entire sections thereof as proprietary or confidential will not be accepted nor honored. DSHS will not honor designations by the bidder where pricing is marked proprietary or confidential.

### **8.7 Order Documents / Second-Tier Contracts**

A proposal submitted to this solicitation is an offer to contract with DSHS. Order documents resulting from this solicitation will be designated as second-tier contracts. Second-tier contracts are established upon award, acceptance and signature by both parties.

### **8.8 Solicitation Amendments**

DSHS reserves the right to revise the schedule or other portions of this solicitation at any time. Changes or corrections will be by one or more written Amendment(s), dated, attached to or incorporated in and made a part of this Solicitation document. All changes must be authorized

and issued in writing by the solicitation coordinator. If there is any conflict between amendments, or between an amendment and the solicitation, whichever document was issued last in time shall be controlling. Only bidders who have properly registered and downloaded the original solicitation directly via WEBS system will receive notification of amendments and other correspondence pertinent to the procurement. Bidders may be required to sign and return solicitation Amendments with their proposal. Bidders must carefully read each amendment to ensure they have met all requirements of the solicitation.

### **8.9 Incorporation of Documents into Contract**

This solicitation document, any subsequent amendments and the bidder's proposal will be incorporated into the final DSHS contract (Work Order)order which is in turn, incorporated into the contractor's master or first-tier contract with DES.

Second-tier contracts may include additional or conflicting terms and conditions as determined by DSHS. In the event of any conflict, the terms of the second-tier contract shall prevail.

## **9 EXHIBITS**

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**Exhibit A – Bidder Certification and Assurances**

**Exhibit B – Sample Work Order (Contract)**

**Exhibit C – Contractor Intake Form**