

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

ITPS Work Request

Solicitation number: ITPS #1624-599

Project name: QA Resource for Clint Receivable System (CRS) Replacement Project

Performance Period: Estimated from 6/15/2016 to 12/31/2017

This solicitation is issued by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) pursuant to the Information Technology Professional Services (ITPS) program which is separately coordinated by the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services (DES).

DES separately maintains a group of categorized notification lists or "pools" of IT service providers within the state's solicitation notification system (WEBS) for state DSHSs to advertise their solicitations to when they seek competitive proposals for their IT business needs. This is one of those solicitations.

The categories of lists are shown below and they identify common IT business needs of state government. This solicitation specifies one or more of those categories (checked).

The only IT service providers who should be able to view and download this solicitation are on the notification list in WEBS for the category checked below.

NOTE: If this is not the case, and you are viewing this solicitation, you received it by some other means outside of WEBS and the DSHS will not entertain a proposal from you. For further detail, see [Bidder Eligibility](#).

<u>Solicitation Schedule</u>	<u>Categories</u>
Solicitation posting date: 4/14/2016	<input type="checkbox"/> ITPS_08215_01. IT Funding & Financial Analysis
Questions due: 4/21/2016, 3 PM PT	<input type="checkbox"/> ITPS_08215_02. IT Business Analysis
Answers published: 4/26/2016	<input type="checkbox"/> ITPS_08215_03. Continuity/Disaster Recovery
Complaints due: 4/29/2016, 3 PM PT	<input type="checkbox"/> ITPS_08215_04. IT Project Management
Proposals due: 5/6/2016, 3 PM PT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ITPS_08215_05. Project Quality Assurance
Oral interviews (if required): 5/18/2016-5/19/2016	<input type="checkbox"/> ITPS_08215_06. Software Testing
<u>Solicitation Coordinator</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> ITPS_08215_07. Client/Server & Web Services
Name: Sarah Pendleton	<input type="checkbox"/> ITPS_08215_08. Database Services
Title: Solicitation Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/> ITPS_08215_09. GIS Services
Phone: (360) 664-6050	<input type="checkbox"/> ITPS_08215_10. Infrastructure Services
Email: sarah.pendleton@dshs.wa.gov	<input type="checkbox"/> ITPS_08215_11. Mainframe Services
	<input type="checkbox"/> ITPS_08215_12. Mobile Services

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1. Bidder Eligibility

Proposals to this solicitation will only be entertained from companies who are currently on the WEBS notification list for the technical service category(ies) checked on the cover page.

The notification lists are separately administered by DES, not the Solicitation Coordinator. Addition to notification lists is a prerequisite to submitting a proposal to this or any other ITPS Work Request and is separately accomplished by submitting a program agreement (DES Master Contract 08215) to DES. For further detail, refer to the DES ITPS [Webpage](#).

NOTE: Master contract submittals received by DES prior to the 20th of each month; but no later, will be reviewed for compliance on the 20th. Those companies will be added to the applicable notification lists in WEBS at the beginning of the month following receipt. Submittals received after the 20th will be processed the following month. DES cannot expedite this schedule to facilitate a company's ability to meet the due date of a currently posted solicitation such as this one.

2. Definitions

“Agency” means a government entity of the state of Washington.

“DES” means the Washington state Department of Enterprise Services, any division, section, office, unit or other entity of DES or any of the officers or other officials lawfully representing DES.

“Notification List” means a list within WEBS which is categorized by technical service category for state DSHSs to use for notification purposes when they seek competitive bids or proposals. A company must first register in WEBS and complete this agreement in order to be added to any notification list.

“Solicitation” means the process of notifying prospective bidders of a request for competitive bids or proposals. Also includes reference to the actual documents used for that process, along with all amendments or revisions thereto.

“Technical Service Category” means an information technology skill categorized by common IT business need of state government described and set forth in this agreement.

“Washington’s Electronic Business Solution or WEBS” means DES’s web-based solicitation notification system.

“Work Order” means a contractual document incorporated by reference to this solicitation and executed between an eligible DSHS and a company. Each Work Order shall be the result of a Work Request (competitive solicitation).

A Work Order generally contains project objectives, description of work, timeline and period of performance, compensation and payment, company responsibilities, DSHS responsibilities, special terms and conditions, signature block, etc., and incorporates this solicitation by reference.

“Work Request” means a DSHS’ solicitation that requests bids or proposals specific to their requirements. An ITPS work request will specify a technical service category(ies) and DSHSs will only entertain bids or proposals from companies who are on the notification lists for the technical

service category(ies) specified.

“You” means the person or firm, completing this agreement, and includes all of its officers and employees.

3. Project Description

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.

OFR has purchased a COTS (off-the-shelf product) from Fair Isaac Corporation (FICO) and the process to replace CRS is currently in motion. Implementation is scheduled for 2017.

a. Solicitation Schedule

The Solicitation Schedule set forth on page one (1) outlines the tentative schedule for important events relating to this Solicitation. Except as modified in an Amendment issued by the Coordinator, the dates and times listed through the due date of the proposal are mandatory deadlines. The remaining dates are estimates and may change without the posting of an Amendment.

b. Location and Regular Business Hours

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) resource is required to be on-site during regular business hours (8am to 4pm, Monday through Friday). The location of the temporary hotel cubical is located at 712 Pear Street SE,

Olympia WA.

c. 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. If the Bidder is proposing a single resource, each bidder may not propose more than two (2) candidates. The QA services provider will be responsible for making recommendations to the CRS Replacement Steering Committee, and the Contracted CRS Replacement Project Manager. The QA resource's services will be requested on an as-needed basis by DSHS at its sole discretion. However, it is estimated that services to be provided by this QA resource will be about 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, monthly reports to CRS Replacement Project Sponsors, CRSR Project Director, and to the CRS Replacement Contracted Project Manager. The frequency of meetings may be adjusted based on project activities.

d. Period of Performance

The term of the resulting contract (Work Order) will be for approximately 18 months commencing on 6/15/2016 or upon the execution date, whichever is later, until 12/31/2017.

The term of the contract (Work Order) may be extended by amendment for two (2) additional one (1) year periods. Amendments extending the period of performance, if any, shall be at the sole discretion of DSHS.

e. Work Requirements

The Contractor shall furnish the necessary personnel, equipment, material and/or services, and otherwise do all things necessary for or incidental to the performance of work as set forth below:

(1) QA Scope of Work Requirements includes but is not limited to the following:

(a) 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?

(b) Adequacy of risks assessments and mitigation plans

Are risks being systematically identified and planned for? Are business processes and policy changes being adequately addressed?

(c) 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?

(d) 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?

(e) Adequacy of project control procedures

Are we using effective techniques for scope/change management, issue resolution, project communications, status assessment, and reporting?

(f) 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?

(g) 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?

(h) 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) Contractor Qualifications

For definitions of Mandatory Requirements and Desired Qualifications see Section 6(b)(1).

Mandatory Requirements

1. Have a minimum of ten (10) 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.

2. Have Key Personnel who each have a minimum of three (3) years QA experience within the past five (5) years.
3. 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.
4. Have experience managing information systems projects consistent with the OCIO Information Technology Project Management Policy, and OCIO Project Management Framework (Guidelines).
5. Have experience with project status reporting and executive sponsor briefing.
6. Be familiar with the Operation of Washington State Government.
7. Have experience providing quality assurance consultation for cross functional (or multi agency) projects with varying levels of project management maturity.

Desired Qualifications

1. Have knowledge of change management, policy development, and integration, for major IT implementations.
2. Have experience providing Quality Assurance Assessments for an enterprise initiative.
3. Have experience providing Quality Assurance Assessments for projects of a similar size.

f. Deliverables

(1) General Deliverable Requirements

The Contractor shall provide the following Deliverables and Services:

- (a) 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.
- (b) 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
- (c) 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).
- (d) 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.

- (e) 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.
- (f) Provide periodic assistance in the facilitation of project planning activities as identified in the completed Periodic Assessments.
- (g) Develop a Post Implementation Report in collaboration with the OFR project manager (or delegate).

(2) Initial and Periodic Assessment Deliverable Requirements:

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

- (a) 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?
- (b) 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?
- (c) Adequacy of risks assessments and mitigation plans. Are risks being systematically identified and planned for the project?
- (d) Adequacy of staffing and role definition. Is the project adequately staffed and does the staff understand their roles and responsibilities? Is staff adequately trained?
- (e) 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?
- (f) Adequacy of project control procedures. Are adequate measures/techniques in place for scope/change management, issue resolution, project communications, status assessment and reporting?
- (g) Effectiveness of interagency team collaboration. Are team members across agencies communicating effectively? Are decisions made for the good of the project as a whole?
- (h) Constructive involvement of customers. Are stakeholders or customers adequately involved in the project planning, development, acceptance and delivery?
- (i) Work product assessment. Are the work products of good quality? If necessary, has OFR staff had sufficient involvement in the work product?

(3) 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 and will follow a template conforming to DCS documentation standards.

g. 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.

4. Required Submittals

Bidders must include, at a minimum, the following electronic submittals attached to an email.

The proposal 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.”

a. Administrative Requirements (Not Scored – Pass/Fail)

The Bidder must respond to **every item in the same order in which they appear below**. Proposals that do not follow the required order below, do not address all items (regardless of whether or not they are applicable), or is not answered in a satisfactory manner, may be rejected and disqualified from the solicitation process as “non-responsive.”

(1) Letter of Submittal

Bidders must include a signed Letter of Submittal on Bidder’s official business letterhead stationary 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:

- (a) Name, address, principal place of business, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address of legal entity or individual with whom a resulting Work Order (contract) would be written;
- (b) The name of the contact person for this Work Request;
- (c) A detailed list of all materials and enclosures included in the Proposal;
- (d) A list of all Work Request amendments downloaded by the Bidder from WEBS and/or the DSHS Procurement Website, and listed in order by amendment number and date;

- (e) A statement substantiating that the person signing the letter is authorized to contractually bind the Bidder;
- (f) Identification of the page numbers on the Bidder's proposal that are marked as "proprietary or confidential" information (see Section 8(f) for details);
- (g) Any and all exceptions and/or revisions to the attached Exhibit B Sample Work Order (contract) including any and all exhibits or attachments to the Work Order;

Simply replacing the entirety of DSHS' sample Work Order (contract) language with Bidder contract language will not suffice and will be considered as non-responsive. DSHS will not consider changes to contract language or negotiate any new language that is submitted after the bid deadline.

- (h) A list identifying any current or former state employees who are employed by, or subcontracted with, the 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 Work Order (contract) resulting from this ITPS solicitation.
 - If the Bidder has no employees or subcontractors that are current or former employees of the state of Washington, then the letter must so state
- (i) Any statements describing variations between the Bidder's proposal and the requirements of this Work Request; and
- (j) A statement confirming that the Bidder holds a valid business license in the state of Washington, or is committed to becoming licensed within thirty (30) days of being determined the Apparent Successful Bidder, or be authorized to do business in the state.

b. Bidder Certification and Assurances Form – Exhibit A (Not Scored)

Bidder must submit a completed Bidder Certification and Assurances Form, Exhibit A. Bidder must sign and include any other required attachments.

c. References (Not Scored - Pass/Fail)

Either in the Letter of Submittal, or in a separate document, the Bidder must provide a list of at least three (3) references for which the Bidder has performed similar services. At least two (2) of the provided references should be related to government contracts for which the Bidder has performed similar services.

If Bidder is proposing multiple resources for the project, they must provide references for **each** proposed resource.

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 will only be contacted for finalist(s).

d. Cost Proposal (SCORED) (20 points possible)

As per Master Contract 08215, bidders may not propose higher rates than the hourly rates they have provided DES. However, that rate may be adjusted to a lower price point.

The QA resource’s services will be requested on an as-needed basis by DSHS at its sole discretion. However, it is estimated that services to be provided by this QA resource will be about 20-30 hours per month on average. Therefore, the Contractor is not guaranteed 20-30 hours per month as the hours may increase or decrease based on DSHS’ need. The total maximum cost for the entire contract period may not exceed \$99,000.

Submit your company’s hourly rate in the following format:

<u>Company Name</u>	<u>Most Competitive Hourly Rate</u>

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.

e. Non-Cost Submittals (SCORED – 95 TOTAL points possible)

The Bidder must respond to each item, whether or not the qualification is met, **in the same order in which they appear below**. Proposals that do not follow the required order or do not clearly address **all** items below may be rejected and disqualified from the solicitation process as “non-responsive.”

Expectation: One separate, scanned email attachment labeled in accordance with the file naming convention specified below.

Required Format: PDF

File naming convention: BidderName_NONCOST.pdf.

(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.

(2) Experience and Qualifications (85 points possible)

For definition of Mandatory Requirements and Desired Qualifications see Section 6(b)(1).

(a) Resume

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

- (b) Mandatory Requirements – Each requirement scored from zero (0) to ten (10)

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 3(e)(2).

Simply citing back to the resume will not be considered sufficient.

- (c) Desired Qualifications – Each requirement scored from zero (0) to five (5)

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 3(e)(2).

If no experience in a requested qualification, it should be noted as such in the response. Simply citing back to the resume will not be considered sufficient.

5. Submission Requirements

a. Delivery of Proposals

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 "Proposal to Work Request #1624-599"

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.

b. 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 cover page. Late proposals will be rejected as non-responsive.

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.

c. Required Submittals

All required submittals must be submitted as instructed. Proposals that do not include all required submittals are determined to be non-responsive and will be rejected. The bidder will be notified of the reasons for such rejection.

d. Format of Proposal

The Bidder must use a font size of twelve (12) or larger. Proposals must also address all sections of this Work Request in the same order as presented in this Work Request using the same headings and numbering scheme.

6. Evaluation and Award

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 an 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.

Proposals that are determined to be non-responsive will be rejected and the Bidder will be notified of the reasons for such rejection.

a. 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-responsible and unable to suit the needs of the state. DSHS reserves the right to waive a reference check. Bidders deemed non-responsible may be rejected.

b. Evaluation Points for Non-Cost Submittals

(1) Mandatory Requirements and Desired Qualification Scoring

(a) 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.

(b) 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.

(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.

(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.

- (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) 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.

c. Evaluation Process

(1) 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 they meet all administrative and mandatory 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. However, if all responding bidders fail to meet any single mandatory item, DSHS reserves the right to either: (1) cancel the procurement, or (2) revise or delete the mandatory item.

(2) Cost Evaluation

The bidder with the lowest hourly rate will receive the maximum 20 cost points. Bidders with higher hourly rates will receive proportionately fewer cost evaluation points based upon the lowest hourly rate as follows:

<p>Bidder A: (Lowest hourly rate)</p>	<p>\$125.00 = 20 points ⇨ Winner receives all 20 available points</p>
<p>Bidder B: (2nd Lowest hourly rate)</p>	<p>\$145.00 $\\$125 / 145 = .86 * 20 = 17.2$ Points <small>Lowest Bid / Higher Bid = Percentage of Available Points * Available Points = Points Awarded</small></p>

(3) Non-Cost Evaluation Process

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.

For information concerning evaluation points and criteria for non-cost submittals, see Section 6(b) above.

(4) Interviews / Oral Evaluations (if applicable/optional)

DSHS may, after evaluating the written Proposals, elect to schedule oral presentations with the top bidders. 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. Interviews may be conducted in person, via video conference, or by phone.

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) Score weighting for each section out of the total possible points are as follows:

The maximum TOTAL point possible for this solicitation is: 155

	Preliminary Score Requirements/Criteria	Points Possible	Weight Assigned
	Executive Summary	10	6%
	Mandatory Requirements	70	45%
	Desired Qualifications	15	10%
	Oral Interview (Optional)	40	26%
(6)	Cost	20	13%

(7) 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
Bidder A	20	68	38	126

Bidder B	15.8	60	35	110.8
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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.

(8) Award

After all considerations, all bidders responding to this solicitation will be notified when DSHS has confirmed its intent to award and have determined the Apparent Successful Bidder(s). 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.

7. Additional Instructions to Bidders

a. Authorized Communication

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

b. Questions

Questions 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 the 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.

c. Complaints

(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 the 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.

(2) Form and Substance of a Complaint

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 on page 1 of this work request;
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.

d. Debrief and Protest

(1) Debrief

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.

(2) 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:

1. Find the protest lacking in merit and uphold DSHS' action; or
2. Find only technical or innocuous errors in the acquisition process and determine the DSHS to be in substantial compliance and reject the protest; or
3. Find merit in the protest and provide options which may include:
 - i. Correcting the errors and re-evaluating all proposals, and/or
 - ii. Reissuing the solicitation and beginning a new process, or
 - iii. 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.

(b) 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

a. Option to Extend

DSHS reserves the right to extend a Work Order issued under this solicitation at its discretion.

b. 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.

c. Withdrawal of Proposal

After a proposal has been submitted, Bidders may withdraw their proposal at any time up to the start of written evaluations as specified in the schedule on page one (1). A written request to withdraw the proposal must be submitted to the Coordinator. If withdrawing the

proposal prior to the proposal due date, the Bidder may submit another proposal at any time up to the proposal due date and time.

d. Ownership of Proposal

All materials submitted in response to this ITPS Solicitation become the property of DSHS, unless received after the deadline in which case the proposal shall be returned to the sender. DSHS shall have the right to use any of the ideas presented as part of the process in any manner as it deems appropriate or beneficial, regardless of whether it is contained in a proposal that results in selection for a Contract.

e. Information Availability

Proposal contents (including pricing information) and evaluations are exempt from disclosure until DSHS announces apparent successful bidders.

f. 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.

g. Work Orders

A proposal submitted to this solicitation is an offer to contract with DSHS. An order document resulting from this solicitation will be designated as a Work Order. Work Orders are established upon award, acceptance and signature by both parties.

h. Solicitation Amendments

DSHS reserves the right to revise 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. 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 will receive notification of amendments and other pertinent correspondence. Bidders must carefully read each amendment to ensure they have met all requirements of the solicitation.

i. Incorporation of Documents

This document, any subsequent amendments and the bidder's proposal will be incorporated into the Work Order which is in turn, incorporated into the successful bidder's ITPS Master Contract with DES.

Work Orders may include additional or conflicting terms and conditions as determined by

DSHS. In the event of any conflict, the terms of the Work Order shall prevail.

9. Exhibits

- a. Exhibit A – Bidder Certification and Assurances**
- b. Exhibit B – Sample Work Order (Contract)**
- c. Exhibit C – Contractor Intake Form**